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## ABSTRACT

In this report seven scholars (Bernard Anderson, James Dumpson, Charles Hamilton, Robert Kill, Vernon Jordan, Jr., Bernard Watson and Robert Weaver) appraise the social, economic, political, and educational status of blacks and black families. Minimal gains and poor prospects for black female heads of families in the current recession job market are discussed. It is noted that in the area of education, despite substantial gains in the struggle for equality, black Americans "must continue to run fast just to stand still." The Carter Administration's fiscal conservatism is cited as a threat to Federal urban and housing programs. Racism is pointed to as it constitutes an ongoing denial of power and self fulfillment to the great majority of black people. It is said that 1977 was a year that demonstrated the necessity to understand politics as a long but promising process. Final recommendations to the American government comprise the issues of unemployment, urban policy and housing, education, health care, welfare reform, youth development, political participation and human rights. (Author/KR)

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# **The State of Black America 1978**

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## Introduction

Almost ten years ago, on February 29, 1968, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, created by President Lyndon B. Johnson to investigate the causes of the devastating riots that rocked America all through the long summer of 1967 and to formulate remedies that would prevent their recurrence, released its long awaited report.

It warned in grim tones that this nation founded on high ideals and noble principles, was moving toward two separate societies, one white, one black—separate and unequal.

For a moment, the American people paused and reflected on the nature of the relations between black and white. Some were appalled, some were personally outraged that the root cause of the troubles was traced to white racism, and some were even saddened by the unpleasant things the report told them about themselves and their neighbors, how deeply white America was implicated in the existence of the ghetto.

"White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

For a moment, the American people seemed to listen to the cries of pain and anguish that rolled up from the streets of Detroit and Newark; for a moment, there seemed to be a stirring of conscience throughout the nation as government, business, labor, foundations, churches and private citizens of every political persuasion stepped forth with their money and moral support as if to say—we have seen the mistakes of the past, now let us as Americans, move forward to correct them.



And now, ten years after the Commission Report, the American people have every right to ask--what has happened in our land since our concern was aroused in 1968? Have the lives of our black citizens changed since then? Out of the violence of the riots, out of the time and efforts spent investigating what went wrong and why, did we learn anything of value? Or was it all, as psychologist Dr. Kenneth Clark told the Commission early in its investigation, a sort of "Alice in Wonderland" type of exercise, in which, despite the spinning of wheels, nothing was really changed?

We do not here attempt to update every section of the Commission Report, but the nearness of the tenth anniversary of its issuance leads us to point out to the American people that its major recommendations have largely gone unimplemented. Not unrelated to them is the fact that life itself has changed very little for the majority of black Americans over the past decade.

Clearly, what the Commission saw in 1968 was the need for a massive and unprecedented outpouring of national commitment and resources to halt the drift toward two separate societies, to swing wide the door of opportunity for those trapped in the ghetto, and to rebuild a stronger and better America from the ashes of the cities.

The recommendations it proposed to the American people to accomplish these objectives were based on three basic and easily understandable principles.

1. To mount programs on a scale equal to the dimension of the problems.
2. To aim those programs for high impact in the immediate future in order to close the gap between promise and performance.
3. To undertake new initiatives and experiments that can change the system of failure and frustration that now dominate the ghetto and weakens our society.

These things never occurred and as this report, "The State of Black America-1978", will demonstrate, the failure to heed the advice of the Commission colors the quality and nature of life within Black America today. The following comparisons between 1966 and 1977 will help clarify this observation.

There are twice as many blacks out of work today as there were ten years ago. In 1967, 638,000 blacks or 7.4 percent of blacks were officially defined as jobless, but in 1977, 13.2 percent or 1,492,000 blacks were unemployed—the largest number of blacks unemployed since the government began compiling such statistics by race. (Appendix A)

The sharp increases in unemployment over the past ten years occurred among all subgroups of black workers. Joblessness among adult black women doubled from 241,000 to 567,000, raising their jobless rate from 7.1 percent to 11.8 percent between 1967 and 1977, while unemployment among black teenagers soared from 204,000 to 369,000, raising their jobless rate from 26.5 percent to 38.6 percent.

But adult black men experienced the sharpest increase in joblessness during the past ten years. In fact, the number of unemployed adult black men tripled (from 193,000 to 556,000) between 1967 and 1977, resulting in their jobless rate jumping from 4.3 percent to 10.1 percent.

There are just as many poor black families today as there were ten years ago, although the number of poor white families has dropped over that period. Between 1966 and 1976,\* the number of poor white families decreased by one

(\*References to the decade 1966 - 1976 are based on the availability of data.)

percent, from 4.1 million to 3.4 million, but the number of poor black families has remained at 1.6 million over the past ten years. Black families are still four times more likely to be poor than white families.

In 1966, the black median family income was 58 percent of white family income. It rose to 61 percent in 1970, but in 1977 it was down to 59 percent—a net gain of one percent at the close of the ten-year period.

It would, however, be incorrect and misleading to maintain that all blacks have failed to make progress over the past decade. Some gains have, in fact, been made by some blacks. As an example, the proportion of middle-income families has grown twice as fast among blacks as whites over the past decade, although whites proportionately still have twice as many middle-income families as blacks. Between 1966 and 1976, the proportion of black families with incomes of \$15,000 or more (in 1976 dollars) increased 58 percent (from 19 percent to 30 percent), while the proportion of middle-income white families rose by 29 percent (from 41 to 53 percent).

On the other hand, the much sharper increase in upper-income families among blacks than whites since 1966 has resulted in a significant narrowing of the gap between the proportions of black and white upper-income families. While the proportion of white families with incomes of \$25,000 or more (in 1976 dollars) increased 58 percent (from 12 to 19 percent) between 1966 and 1976, the proportion of upper-income families among blacks increased three times as fast (from 3 to 8 percent). These statistics, however, should not be viewed in isolation, for when placed against the statistics of blacks still in poverty, they indicate the disturbing duality of the black economy—a slowly growing black middle-class and an increasingly jobless lower economic class.

During the decade 1966 to 1976, increased high school enrollment by black teenagers, coupled with higher retention rates, resulted in increased educational attainment as measured by numbers of years of education completed. Also occurring during the same period of time was an increase in black college enrollment from 4.6 percent to 10.7 percent.

There were also other signs of progress over the past decade. The growing number of blacks in decision-making positions in both the public and private sector, the opening up of job opportunities in fields where blacks were formerly excluded or a rarity, the substantial increase in the number of black elected officials and of blacks in appointive positions, and the absence—except in a few scattered incidents—of the virulent type of racism that marked so much of the nation's past.

Still, the harsh truth remains, as this report will document, that the majority of blacks have not seen their status materially improved over the past decade, and that for many, their lives are still lived out in despair and deprivation. To many white Americans, given what they see as the progress made by blacks over the past few years, this observation may seem unwarranted, but the facts are there to support it and an analogy drawn by one of the contributors to this document, Dr. Bernard Anderson, makes clear the meaning of those facts.

Comparing the progress of black people to the progress of a train, Dr. Anderson notes that the caboose is always at the rear of the train, and no matter how fast the engine proceeds, the caboose is fated never to catch up. It will always be at the end of the train, unless, by inference, some special arrangements are made.



But there are signs that white America does not believe this; that instead it views the struggle of black Americans against racial discrimination as being virtually over. A comparison of two surveys taken by Louis Harris Associates in 1970 and in 1977 is instructive. Between the time of the first survey, conducted for the National Urban League, and the second, conducted for the Chicago Tribune, there has been such a sharp reversal in white attitudes that today only a small minority of whites believe that racial discrimination currently exists against blacks.

In the 1977 survey, only 33 percent of all whites said they believed blacks experience discrimination in trying to achieve full equality, while 76 percent of all whites believed blacks experienced such discrimination in 1970.

Similarly, today only one-third of all whites believe that blacks experience discrimination in getting decent housing compared to 76 percent seven years ago.

Only one-fifth of all whites today feel that blacks are discriminated against in trying to get quality education in the public schools compared to 60 percent in 1970.

In 1970, 62 percent of all whites believed that blacks were discriminated against in trying to achieve equality in the area of jobs. But by 1977, only 34 percent of whites believed blacks experienced discrimination in trying to obtain white collar jobs and only 26 percent believed they were discriminated against in trying to achieve skilled jobs. Only one-fifth of all whites today believe that blacks are discriminated against with regard to equality of wages and salaries.

Between 1970 and 1977, the proportion of whites who believed that the push for racial equality was going "too fast" went up from 49 percent to 55 percent.

Not only do most whites think that very little discrimination exists against blacks today, but less than half think that black unemployment is higher than white unemployment. According to a CBS/NY Times poll of 1,603 adults in October, 1977, 40 percent of the respondents thought that the unemployment rate for blacks was either less than or equal to that of whites, while 49 percent thought it was higher for blacks than whites.

This matter of perception is important in the context of a report on "The State of Black America-1978" since it defines a barrier that prevents White America from understanding the reality of the black experience or comprehending the serious nature of the problems many blacks must face on a day-to-day basis just to survive. Majority Americans have their impressions of what constitutes life within black communities, shaped by forces that are at best second hand. Their perceptions are formed by the media, by impressions derived from family, friends and associates, and by their institutions; but rarely by a first hand knowledge of how blacks live or how they think.

Without this type of knowledge, it is to be expected that blacks and whites will see situations involving race from different points of view, and that in the instance of the latter group, the perceptions may not accurately reflect the reality of the situation, thus making even more difficult the necessary process of transmitting to the majority the scope and urgency of the crisis situation that continues to hover over Black America.



As reflected in the results of a survey taken among the affiliates of the National Urban League, late in 1977, Black America sees itself in a much different light than White America sees it. The executive directors of the affiliates were asked to complete a five-part questionnaire, after consultation with staff and community sources, that would provide a reading of the mood of Black America. Operating as they do, on a daily basis in Black communities all across the country and with ties to the larger community as well, the affiliate directors were in an especially favorable position to sample and synthesize this mood.

The first question put to the affiliates sought to establish the status of black-white relations in their individual communities—whether they had improved over the past year, deteriorated or remained the same.

Of the affiliates responding, 15 percent reported some improvement in black-white relationships; 42 percent reported relations had deteriorated; and 43 percent reported relations had remained the same.

Of the affiliates indicating some improvement, 36 percent cited heightened political participation including more black representation; another 36 percent cited active leadership by community groups including Urban Leagues but not restricted to Urban Leagues as a principal reason for improvement; while the remaining 27 percent cited miscellaneous reasons such as implementation of affirmative action programs, increased employment, and improved community/local government relationships.

In reporting deterioration in black-white relationships, 53 percent cited both high unemployment among both races especially teenagers, and housing as the principal reasons for deterioration; and another 33 percent reported school desegregation orders as the principal reason.

The remaining 13 percent cited the lack of affirmative action programs and other reasons as being the principal factor in the deterioration.

Of the affiliates reporting relations had remained the same during the year, 32 percent reported the white community continued to be unresponsive to the needs of minorities; another 32 percent cited prolonged inflation and unemployment; an additional 25 percent cited the lack of quality education and eight percent cited miscellaneous reasons.

The next question asked the affiliates to list, in order of priority, the five major needs of their communities. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority, 79 percent, listed employment as the number one priority. Other major needs listed in order of descending importance were housing, education, health, and communities safe from crime. Also mentioned among the needs were mass transportation, youth programs, access to financial lending institutions, an end to "redlining," and consumer education.

When asked to report on whether there had been any increase in the number of community-based efforts to address local problems, 48.6 percent reported that there had been an increase in such efforts; 18 percent indicated there had been no change in the volume of such efforts, and 33.3 percent reported there had been minimal or modest effort at best.

Of the affiliates indicating increased activity, over 30 percent said the primary thrust of the programs was in the employment area, while 18 percent said the community involvement was in the area of crime prevention. Other programs listed were in health, housing, community blight, education and youth.

As to the effect of the community programs, 17 percent felt they had been effective; 64 percent felt they had little effect, while 19 percent listed them as ineffective.

When asked to assess the mood of their communities in such crucial areas as employment, better housing and improved education, as contrasted with the mood of 1976 during the same period, 79 percent reported they were less hopeful about more employment. Eighty-three percent said they were less hopeful about better housing, and 82 percent said they were less hopeful for improved education in their communities.

Finally, the affiliates were asked to address themselves to the possibility that because of the high unemployment rate among young black people, a permanent class of people is being created who will never be productive members of society.

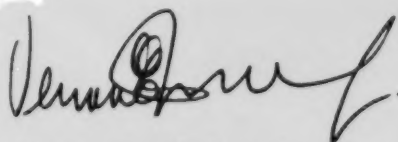
In responding, 78 percent of the affiliates indicated they felt such a class is being created, while 22 percent felt that it was not. Of those affiliates responding in the affirmative, 63 percent cited the high rate of unemployment among young people, 28 percent cited the failure of local, state and national governments to effectively address the problems of inner-city youth, and 26 percent cited the number of young people who are increasingly being excluded from the mainstream of society, as reasons for the situation.

Of the affiliates indicating a no answer, over 84 percent said they were hopeful a variety of yet to be determined economic approaches will prevent the coming into being of the possibility raised by the question. Eleven percent cited the stability of the black family as a positive factor.

Weighing the results of the Harris surveys and the responses from the National Urban League affiliates against each other, the dichotomy between white and black perceptions is sharply etched. "The State of Black America-1978" can thus perform an invaluable service to the American people by bringing into proper focus, on the basis of objective data, the present condition of Black Americans.

In compiling "The State of Black America-1978", the National Urban League has turned to six distinguished scholars and asked them to provide papers appraising the status of blacks in the areas of housing, social welfare, politics, education, the economy and family life. Their papers represent their independent thinking and constitute a unique contribution to the literature that treats the black experience in America. The National Urban League gratefully acknowledges their invaluable assistance in the preparation of "The State of Black America-1978."

The picture the authors paint of Black America is a sombre one, not bereft of a degree of optimism that the problems they allude to are solvable, but clearly warning that the absence of the violence that aroused and alarmed the nation a decade ago, should not be interpreted as a sign that all is well in Black America.



Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., President  
National Urban League, Inc.  
January 17, 1978

## THE ECONOMY

by

Dr. Bernard E. Anderson

At the beginning of 1977, the economic condition of black America was not good. The rate of unemployment among blacks, according to the official definition, stood at 12.6 percent; the unemployment rate among black teenagers was 35.6 percent. Slightly more than one half million adult black men (588,000) and a similar number of adult black women (517,000) were without jobs. Some of the nation's key industries showed distressing unemployment among black workers: 13.1 percent in the steel industry, 10.8 percent in automobiles, 12.9 percent in apparel, and 14.0 percent in trade. In every case, both for the economy at large, and for the subsectors of the economy, black unemployment rates were two or more times as high as unemployment among whites.

Regrettably, the dawn of 1978 shows little, if any improvement in this unfavorable scenario. Indeed, by some measures, the situation among blacks in late 1977 was worse than at the beginning of the year. The black unemployment rate in November was 13.8 percent, slightly higher than the rate observed one year earlier. Black teenage unemployment was 39.0 percent--an all time high. At the same time, however, the unemployment rate among whites dropped from 7.3 to 6.0 percent and among white teenagers, it fell from 17.2 to 14.5 percent. Of course, these figures reflect only those who were actively seeking work. If the "discouraged workers," (i.e., those who



have given up the search for jobs because they think none are available) are included, the unemployment rate among blacks during the third quarter of 1977, would have been 25.3 percent, compared to only 11.7 percent among whites.

Thus, a review of the American economy in 1977 reveals a disturbing duality in the pattern of economic progress. Conditions among members of the majority population, while not ideal by any measure, showed evidence of continuing improvement. In contrast, conditions in the black community showed stagnation and economic decay. This duality in economic progress is one of the nation's most troublesome domestic problems, and one that demands a bold and imaginative public policy response. The following review of economic trends during 1977 will expand upon the comments above, and will provide a foundation for assessing the prospects for black economic progress in 1978.

#### Trends in Business Conditions

The assessment of black economic progress must be viewed from the backdrop of trends in the economy at large. During 1977, the economy continued its recovery from the recession of 1973-75, but at an increasingly modest rate of growth. Real gross national product, the monetary value of all goods and services, increased at a rate of 7.5 percent during the first quarter of 1977, but slipped back to six percent in the second. By the third quarter of the year, the rate of growth was down to 4.7 percent, and the prognosis for the remainder of the year was for even slower growth.

Inflation, measured by the implicit GNP price deflator, hovered at about 5.6 percent throughout the year, while the consumer price index, the more popular measure of inflation, declined from a level of about eight percent at the beginning of the year to less than five percent at year's end.

Throughout the year, the business sector displayed much caution toward plant and equipment spending--especially as it affected capacity. Nonresidential fixed investment in real terms was about five percent below the levels reached in late 1973, the business cycle peak. By contrast, at this point in previous business expansions, such outlays were more than eight percent higher.

Most of the sluggishness can be traced to the lower rate of investment in nonresidential structures. Production of durable equipment in real terms ran much lower than at comparable stages of previous business expansions. The volume of bricks and mortar going up was much less than typical for postwar recoveries. The uncertainty about business investment in plant and equipment placed a damper on growth throughout most of the year.

At the same time, the consumer worked hard to bolster economic activity. The rate of growth in real sales to final consumers accelerated above four percent throughout the year, even as real GNP growth slowed. Consumer sales rose at a 3.8 percent clip in the first quarter and jumped to 5.1 percent in the record. Retail sales continued strong throughout the remainder of the year, fueled in part by notable advances in personal income.

In short, throughout the year, the economy experienced a steady, but cautious recovery from the recession, with both positive and negative elements in evidence. Most important for the issues discussed here is the expectation that economic growth through 1978 will continue to be modest, and indeed, may even fall to an unsatisfactory level if additional stimulus is not provided in the form of a major tax cut. Any further reduction in the rate of economic expansion will be very harmful to the economy at large, and will greatly worsen the prospects for improving the relative economic position of minorities.

#### Labor Market Trends

The economy had vigorous growth in both the size of the labor force and in job creation during 1977. From November, 1976 through November, 1977, 3.1 million persons entered the labor force. Of that number, 1.7 million, or 52.3 percent were adult women; and 503,000 or 16.0 percent were teenagers.

During the same period, the number of persons employed increased by 3,960,000, or 4.5 percent. The rapid expansion of employment raised the proportion of the population with jobs from 56.2 percent to 57.8 percent--an all time high. The number of unemployed dropped from 7.7 to 6.8 million but the unemployment rate continued to hover around seven percent.

There are many people outside the mainstream of the labor force who will, when opportunities present themselves, take available jobs. This movement was substantial during the latter months of the year. The failure of the unemployment rate to drop more sharply in the face of vigorous job expansion can be explained in large part by the rapid growth in the percentage of the working age population seeking jobs.

### Black Labor Force Trends

The vigorous growth in labor force participation increased the difficulty of lowering the black unemployment rate. During 1977, the number of blacks in the civilian labor force increased from 11.1 to 11.6 million, an increase of 4.5 percent. The number of blacks employed rose from 9.6 to 10.0 million, an increase of only 4.1 percent. The divergence of the rate of employment growth among blacks, compared with their labor force growth, contributed to the rise in the black unemployment rate from 13.5 percent in November, 1976 to 13.8 percent one year later.

The deterioration in the black unemployment situation was concentrated among adult women and youth. During the year, the unemployment rate among black women aged 20 years and over increased from 11.0 percent to 12.5 percent while the rate for blacks of both sexes aged 16 to 19 jumped from 36.5 percent to 39.0 percent. These two groups have traditionally shown the greatest sensitivity to changing labor market conditions, and the expansion of jobs undoubtedly led women and youth to seek work. Unfortunately, for many, the expectations were in vain.

The deterioration in the unemployment experiences of blacks during 1977 was not concentrated in any sector of the economy, but was widespread across a wide range of industries. For example, the economy can be divided into 13 major industry groups ranging from construction through public administration. When unemployment rates in the industry groups were compared for the third quarter of 1976 and the same quarter one year later, the record showed black



unemployment increased in seven of the 13 industries. At the same time, the unemployment rate among whites declined in each of the industries except one, where it remained constant over the year.

#### Black Income

The persistent problems of unemployment among black workers have virtually arrested the growth of income in the black community. From 1974 through 1976, the median income of black families, when adjusted for inflation, remained at \$9,242, while the median income of whites increased from \$15,478 to \$15,537, an increase of 3.8 percent. Thus, blacks have lost ground since 1969 when their real income, at \$9,315, was 61 percent that of the average white family.

But not all blacks have fared poorly during the past several years. The proportion of black families with incomes above \$25,000, when adjusted for inflation, increased from 5.4 percent in 1970 to 6.8 percent in 1976. Similar gains were recorded by black families earning between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per year.

At the opposite end of the income hierarchy, deterioration in the status of blacks was evident in the higher number of families with incomes less than \$5,000 per year. The proportion of blacks in that income group increased by four percent during the six-year period, while the proportion of whites in the lower income group declined by about 11 percent.



### Blacks and the Urban Crisis

Much of the continuing malaise of black unemployment and reduced income can be explained by the heavy concentration of blacks in hard-ship cities. About 60 percent of the nation's unemployed blacks live in the central cities, and are concentrated in the low income areas of the cities. Whites are much more dispersed geographically, and far fewer are located in depressed central city areas.

The failure of black unemployment to decline more in line with the expansion of jobs is due in large part to the failure of the cities to bounce back sharply from the 1973-75 recession. Many cities, especially those in the north and midwest, still have unemployment rates substantially above the national level two years into the recovery. These cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, and St. Louis, have lost large numbers of semiskilled, manufacturing jobs that long represented the backbone of employment for urban blacks. The recovery has seen the services industries grow rapidly, but not the manufacturing industries located in the urban areas.

### Foreign Trade

A related, and disturbing, trend has been the continuing loss of domestic jobs in urban areas due to increasing competition from imports. During the year, the nation learned about plant closings in the steel industry in Youngstown, Ohio and in Johnstown and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, among other

major steel towns. There were reports of continuing loss of jobs in the apparel and electronics industries, and many small manufacturers in high wage communities came under intense pressure because of foreign competition.

The import issue bears great significance for black employment because many black workers are concentrated in the jobs most vulnerable to competition from abroad. At least 30 percent of the steelworkers in Pittsburgh, Gary, and other major industrial areas are black. In cities like New York, and Philadelphia, black and Hispanic women represent a major part of the apparel industry workforce, which is also subjected to stiff foreign competition. When these industries suffer declines in employment, it sounds the deathknell for job opportunities for many persons who, because of limited skills and advanced age, have little hope of finding alternative employment. Specific measures to deal with high urban unemployment and the worsening threat of joblessness due to foreign imports are necessary if anything significant can be done about black unemployment in the near future.

#### Presidential Concern With Black Unemployment

Black unemployment became a matter of national concern when, in August, President Carter asked Secretary of Labor, Ray Marshall to prepare a report explaining the paradox of persistent joblessness among blacks in an environment of expanding job opportunities. Secretary Marshall, reporting to the President in September, stressed the rapid growth in the size of the black labor force, and the unbalanced nature of the economic recovery as factors responsible for the unfavorable labor market status of blacks.

What might have been added was that little in the worsening picture of 1977 was new. Blacks have always moved in the wake of economic forces determining the demand for whites in the American economy. There has never been a period in American economic history when black workers have gained at the expense of everyone else. Just the reverse has been true. The long record shows that black unemployment has consistently remained at high levels until labor markets for majority group workers have become so tight that employers have little choice other than to utilize black labor.

Thus, much of the continuing malaise among the black unemployed can be traced directly to the failure to move more quickly toward full employment. Modest growth, constrained by deep fears of inflation, may benefit some sectors of American society, but slow growth policies are devastating to black economic aspirations. Full employment is a sine qua non for economic equality; it always has been, and continues to be so today.

#### Economic Policy During 1977

When the new Administration assumed office in January, 1977, the economy had entered a lull characterized by a high rate of unemployment and a depressed growth rate. The recovery from the 1973-75 recession seemed stalled and the need for additional stimulus was clear. In response to these circumstances, the Administration designed an economic stimulus package containing the following major components:

1) Tax Cuts

- \$50 Rebate for each individual, \$11.4 Billion in 1977.
- Personal Income Tax Cut, \$4 Billion.
- Business Tax Cut of \$900 Million.

2) Countercyclical Revenue Sharing, \$1 Billion.

3) Direct Employment Programs

- Public Service Employment: An increase from 300,000 to 725,000.
- Youth Employment: \$1.5 Billion request for about 400,000 jobs and training opportunities.

4) Public Works

- Request for \$4.0 billion to generate about 300,000 jobs involving construction, renovation, or repair of local public works projects (streets, sewers, and other public facilities).

The Congressional review of the Administration's program produced several important changes. First, as the economy perked up early in the year, and the fear of inflation in the business community quickened, the \$50 rebate was dropped from the package. Second, instead of spreading the public works spending over two years as the Administration requested, the full amount of \$4 billion was allocated to be spent in the first year. Third, although the request for \$1.5 billion for youth was approved in the economic stimulus package, no specific legislation on youth unemployment was developed until mid-year, and the youth employment bill was not signed into law until August.

In addition to the PSE and public works programs, the Administration also initiated other programs to reduce unemployment. Plans were made to double the size of the Job Corps from 20,000 to 40,000 enrollees. The HIRE program was launched to generate jobs in the private sector for veterans. The STIP program was launched late in the year to improve the quality of skills training through the private sector. And finally, measures were undertaken to expand opportunities in apprenticeship. All in all, the initiatives of the Administration in employment and training programs exceeded anything observed during the previous eight years.

The Administration's jobs programs were implemented within the framework of CETA, the national manpower policy in which much of the decision-making authority is decentralized to the state and local level. Blacks in large numbers were served by the CETA programs. For example, more than one-third of all participants in the Title I comprehensive manpower services programs were black. About one-fourth of the public service employees were blacks, and black youth accounted for about forty percent of all persons in the summer youth programs.

Yet, despite the volume of new program activity, and the significant minority participation, all is not well in the employment and training arena. During the summer of 1977, for example, the Department of Labor reported that black youth participation in summer programs was actually lower than the year before. Also, much of the CETA funding goes into communities where the seriousness of unemployment does not compare with that in the inner cities where many unemployed blacks reside.



Further, there are complaints that too much emphasis in current programs has been placed on public service jobs that often appear to be temporary, rather than on training in marketable job skills that will improve the opportunity for the disadvantaged to obtain permanent jobs in the private sector.

### Monetary Policy

Throughout the year, the Federal Reserve Board, the second hand on the economic steering wheel, pursued an increasingly cautious monetary policy. The money supply was increasing smartly at the beginning of the year and liquidity was in a favorable position for economic stimulation. But during the second quarter, the Fed apparently thought the economic recovery was about to get out of hand, and so moved to restrain money growth by boosting interest rates. The Fed, and especially its Chairman, Arthur Burns, would like to encourage continued economic growth, but at no risk of worsening inflation. Thus, monetary policy toward the end of 1977 became increasingly cautious, and much less accommodating to vigorous economic growth.

### Projections for 1978

A number of economic forecasters, using sophisticated econometric forecasting models, have suggested where the American economy seems to be going in 1978. The most reasonable prognosis is that real GNP will rise about 4.5 percent, assuming there is a major tax cut at mid-year. Without the tax cut, growth is expected to fall below 4.0 percent and unemployment might be expected to rise.

Through 1978, inflation measured by the GNP deflator, is expected to rise about 5.7 percent and interest rates are expected to remain near current levels through the first half of the year, but to rise somewhat during the second half. Most importantly, the unemployment rate is not expected to decline substantially until late in 1978 but should end up near 6.5 percent with an average of 6.8 percent for the year.

#### New Program Initiatives

According to press accounts, the Carter Administration is considering additional measures in the area of employment and training policy. An additional \$500 million of funding will be requested for the new Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act. The Administration originally requested \$1.5 billion for the Act, but Congress appropriated only \$1.0 billion. In addition, more efforts will be made to improve the targeting of CETA funds to increase their impact on the minority unemployed.

Another potentially significant measure is the plan to fund, in several isolated areas, projects for employing welfare recipients in order to test the feasibility of the ideas contained in the Better Jobs and Income Program, the Administration's welfare reform package.

On the other hand, it is likely that Congress will agree on a national energy policy in 1978, in addition to a major tax cut. Increases in social security taxes are also on the drawing board, but will not become operative until 1979. Given the expected size of the increases, there may be an adverse impact on new hiring, even in 1978.

Finally, in late 1977, President Carter announced his support for the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill. The compromise version of the bill which the President embraced is almost entirely process oriented, and does not contain specific programs to fulfill the promises expressed in the policy declaration. Administration spokesmen argue that implementing programs will be developed in due course, and that the revised bill, when passed by Congress, will provide a major impetus toward the attainment of full employment.

#### Economic Policy and the Black Condition

The review of developments in 1977 and the projection for 1978 bear out one major conclusion that almost always follows an assessment of the state of the black economy: national economic policies are critical to economic gains for the black community. In many respects, the black community is like the caboose on a train. As the train speeds up, so does the last car, and as the train slows down, the caboose follows accordingly. But in the nature of the case, the caboose never catches up with the engine.

Like all analyses, the one expressed above has its limitations. But the salient point is that special efforts must be undertaken to ensure that black Americans enjoy the fruits of economic progress consumed by other segments of the population.

In accomplishing that objective, it is important to recognize that different economic policies might have differential effects on various groups. For example, the major economic policy question today is how much stimulus should be applied to lower the rate of unemployment. There is a pervasive fear

that if the economy moves ahead too fast, the result will not be balanced growth, but inflation. Thus, much of the attention in economic policy formulation turns away from ways to hasten the decline in unemployment, and toward ways to encourage business confidence and to restrain inflationary pressures. Whatever their merits, such policies exacerbate racial inequality in economic life.

There are some questions about the validity of the tradeoff between inflation and unemployment, and in recent years, some economists have played down the significance of the tradeoff as a device for assessing domestic economic policies. But to the extent that a tradeoff might exist, the key question is "Who gains and who loses from the inflation?" and "Who gains and who loses from the unemployment?"

An assessment of past economic trends shows that minorities and the poor gain relative to others when labor markets are tight and the demand for labor is high, even if those conditions are accompanied by a somewhat higher rate of inflation than has been customary. That is not to suggest that the solution to the employment problems of blacks and other minorities will be found in worsening inflation. No knowledgeable economist would even suggest such a strategy. Instead there must be a more determined effort to deal with the inflationary pressures in the economy while attempting to stimulate growth necessary to reach full employment.

Recent experience has shown that policies that sacrifice full employment in the hope that they will generate price stability usually result in both higher levels of unemployment and inflation. Such policies are especially harmful to the economic interest of the black community.

### Urban Policy

In addition to the need to generate vigorous growth in order to enlarge the scope of economic opportunity for racial minorities, there must be a national urban policy that targets on the pockets of unemployment. Targeted labor market policies and economic development policies can help improve the economic conditions of the cities, and in the process, increase the economic opportunity available to the urban unemployed.

During 1977, there were reports about the promulgation of a national urban policy that would focus not only on the hardship cities of the northeast and the midwest, but would also improve conditions in other urban areas. Few proposals for improving the economic status of blacks are more important than the development of a national urban policy. The black unemployed are seriously disadvantaged by their disproportionate concentration in areas where jobs are declining and the prospects for development are dim. Such communities deserve special attention in national policy in order to produce more balanced growth in economic progress.

But in shaping a national urban policy, the needs of urban minorities must be kept uppermost in the minds of policy-makers. Whether considering an urban development bank, tax credits to the private sector to stimulate job creation, or fiscal relief for municipalities, it is important to ask: "What short-term impact will the measures have on urban unemployment?"

Proposals that do not hold promise for narrowing the job and income gap between minorities and others will not contribute significantly to the advancement of the economic well being of the urban communities as a whole.



Equal Employment Opportunity

Race and sex discrimination continue to perpetuate employment and income inequality between blacks and other members of American society. Despite legal protection for equal opportunities, blacks are still disproportionately concentrated in jobs with inadequate pay, low status, and limited opportunities for advancement. The black worker is still the last to be hired and the first to be fired, and although discrimination is less pervasive today than in the past there are numerous deviations from full equal opportunity in the labor market.

During 1977, there were conflicting signals in the enforcement of equal job opportunities. On the one hand, several Court decisions reinforce the notion that remedies including back pay should be awarded when minorities, and women suffer from the present effects of past discrimination. But in several decisions, the Courts also showed increasing concern for the potential damage to the interests of white males when remedies to correct discrimination are designed.

Many majority group persons think their employment opportunities will be jeopardized by affirmative action for minorities and women and they have turned to the Courts for protection. The Courts have shown increasing willingness to listen. Uncertainty about the impact of affirmative action on white males undoubtedly reflects an awareness of limited opportunities in the labor market, stemming in part from the slow growth in the number of good jobs that offer promotion opportunities. Prospects for slow growth, and the limited upgrading that accompany such conditions will continue to exacerbate competition among minorities, women, and others through 1978.

The past year also saw important new steps undertaken in the management of equal opportunity enforcement. Under new leadership, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission inaugurated new methods for tackling the growing case-load, and developed new guidelines for employee selection and review. These administrative measures are encouraging, and promise to increase the effectiveness of EEOC's adjudication of individual claims of discrimination.

New Administrative procedures have also been adopted by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance in the U.S. Department of Labor. The pursuit of equal job opportunity among government contractors seems to be taking on more energy and force, including an increasing willingness to cancel contracts, and to disqualify persistent violators from future contract-bidding opportunities.

At the same time in 1977, little progress was made in designing new and more effective ways to get at systematic discrimination, the major barrier to equality. Certainly every effort should be made to increase EEOC's effectiveness in the expeditious processing of individual claims of discrimination. But if any major progress is to be made in equalizing the occupational and income status of minorities and others in the American economy, far more has to be done to root out widespread employment practices which appear to be objective, but which produce highly unequal results in job opportunities for minorities. A major assault on systemic discrimination in both the private and public sectors, including efforts to target in on persistent violators, should be a top priority of equal employment enforcement agencies in 1978.

Conclusion

In considering the state of the black economy, there is much reason to be disappointed. The gains during the past year were minimal, and the prospects for the immediate months ahead are not optimistic. The nation faces serious economic difficulties, and while progressive and enlightened public policy can do much to arrest deterioration in economic activity, it is unlikely that all groups will gain equally from the economic progress that is generated.

There is a serious need to confront the duality in economic trends that finds increasing numbers of blacks and other minorities slipping behind in jobs and income, while the majority population enjoys the fruits of economic progress. Specific measures should be taken early in the year to reduce the serious economic inequality in American life. Much of what needs to be done may well be reflected in policies now under consideration. But more than likely, additional policy initiatives will be required.

Among the most important components of a progressive assault on economic inequality are a national urban policy, and a vigorous pursuit of equal employment opportunity. Efforts specifically designed to promote the economic status of minorities and the poor will produce enormous benefits for the nation at large, and will help fulfill the promise of democracy which the nation holds dear.

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THE ECONOMIC STATUS of BLACK FAMILIES and CHILDREN

By

Dr. Robert B. Hill

Although white workers showed some signs of recovering in 1977 from the devastating 1974-75 recession, the economic crisis in the black community remained at depression levels. While official unemployment among whites fell from 7.0 percent to 6.5 percent between 1976 and 1977, the jobless rate for blacks in 1977 stayed at the alarming rate of 13 percent.

And when the "hidden unemployed," (i.e., discouraged workers, etc.) are included, actual black unemployment went over three million in 1977, while their unofficial jobless rate reached 25 percent. Thus, for the third consecutive year (1975-77), one out of every four black workers in the nation remain unemployed. 1/

While black adults continued to experience high levels of joblessness in 1977, unemployment among black youth soared. In fact, the jobless rate for black teenagers rose from 37 percent -- in both 1975 and 1976 -- to almost 40 percent in 1977. And when the "hidden unemployed" are included, the unofficial jobless rate for black teenagers jumped to about 60 percent in 1977.

What impact is this unrelenting recession/depression having on the structure and functioning of black families? Is the income gap between black and white families widening or narrowing? Is the number of black children being reared in poverty increasing or decreasing? Are middle income black families declining? How well are one-parent and two-parent black families coping with the economic crisis? How supportive have the extended family and kin been among black families? We will now examine these questions and other issues related to the current social and economic status of black families in this nation.



### Unemployment Status

In order to provide the proper context for this analysis, it is necessary to assess the extent of unemployment experienced by various groups of black workers. First of all, overall black unemployment in 1977 -- even as officially defined -- was at the highest level ever recorded for blacks. In the peak recession year of 1975, for example, a total of 1,459,000 blacks were unemployed, but by 1977, a total of 1,492,000 blacks were jobless. Moreover, the number of unemployed blacks in 1977 was 60,000 more than there were in 1976 when black unemployment was down to 1,433,000.<sup>2/</sup>

This is in sharp contrast to employment trends among whites, who have experienced steady declines in unemployment between 1975 and 1977. Between 1975 and 1976, white unemployment fell from 6.4 million to 5.9 million and by 1977 it further declined to 5.5 million. In short, the number of white unemployed decreased by about one million between 1975 and 1977, while the number of jobless blacks increased by 30,000.

### Adult Workers

While official unemployment among adult white men fell by 11 percent (from 2.5 million to 2.2 million) in 1977, unemployment among adult black men declined by only two percent (from 566,000 to 556,000). Thus, while the jobless rate for white men fell from 5.4 to 4.7 percent, the jobless rate for black men declined only slightly (from 10.6 to 10.1 percent) between 1976 and 1977.



But unemployment among adult black women rose sharply in 1977, while it was declining among adult white women. Between 1976 and 1977, the number of unemployed black women jumped from 521,000 to 567,000, raising their jobless rate from 11.3 to 11.8 percent. At the same time, the number of jobless white women fell by about 75,000 reducing their jobless rate from 6.8 to 6.3 percent.

How extensive was joblessness among black heads of families? The number of unemployed black men heading households declined by about 30,000 (from 345,000 in 1976), reducing their jobless rate from 7.9 to 7.2 percent between 1976 and 1977. But, as was true among adult black women in general, unemployment among black women heads of households increased from 188,000 to 200,000 between 1976 and 1977, causing their jobless rate to remain at record levels (from 11.5 to 11.7 percent).

It is important to note that the number of jobless black women heading households today (about 200,000) is significantly higher than the number who were unemployed (172,000) during the peak recession year of 1975. This is not true among black men heading households whose unemployment today (316,000) is significantly lower than the number who were unemployed (395,000) in 1975. Thus, it is clear that, among adult workers in America, black women in general and black female family heads in particular are receiving the brunt of the continuing recession/depression.<sup>3/</sup>

### Teenage Unemployment

However, the sharpest increases in joblessness among blacks in 1977 occurred among teenagers. The number of unemployed black male teenagers rose from 179,000 to 195,000, raising their jobless rate from 35.4 to 37.2 percent, while the number of jobless white male teenagers fell from 749,000, resulting in their unemployment rate dropping from 17.3 to 15.3 percent. At the same time, the number of unemployed black female teenagers rose from 166,000 to 174,000, causing their jobless rate to go from 39.3 to 40.1 percent, while the number of unemployed white female teenagers increased slightly (from 607,000 to 625,000), causing their jobless rate to remain essentially unchanged (at 16.4 percent).

In sum, increases in unemployment in 1977 were greatest among adult black women and black teenagers -- two groups of earners that have been essential for providing vital primary and supplemental income to black families. As might be expected, as a result of widespread joblessness among these workers, the proportion of multiple earner black families has been on the decline.<sup>A/</sup>

### Multiple Earners

Since 1971, the proportion of black families with two or more earners has steadily declined, while it has steadily risen among white families. In 1971, for example, 51 percent of all black families had two or more earners, compared to 53 percent of all white families. But, by 1976, only 48 percent of all black families had two or more earners, compared to 55 percent of all white families.

This is a sharp reversal of the historic pattern in which multiple earner families have been traditionally higher among black than white families. Clearly, the double impact of high rates of unemployment and inflation is causing disproportionate numbers of white wives to seek work, while employment opportunities are declining for black wives.<sup>5/</sup>

#### Family Income

The disproportionate increase in unemployment along with the decline in multiple earner black families has resulted in a widening gap in income between blacks and whites. In 1970, black median family income was 61 percent of white family income. But by 1976, black family income accounted for only 59 percent of white median family income.

Moreover, the economic gap between black and white families has been widening in absolute, as well as in relative, terms. For, while the difference between white and black family income (\$14,268 against \$8,779) in 1975 was \$5,489, the gap between white and black family income (\$15,537 against \$9,242) widened to \$6,295 in 1976. Thus, this stagnant economy has caused black families to steadily lose ground to white families in both absolute and relative terms.<sup>6/</sup>

Two-parent black families with both parents in the labor force, however, have incomes closer to their white counterparts than do two-parent families with only one parent in the labor force. Black husband-wife families with wives in the labor force had a median income of \$15,703 in 1976, which was 82 percent of the median income (of \$19,047)

of their white counterparts. But black husband-wife families with wives who were not in the labor force had a median income of only \$9,219 in 1976 -- which was only 65 percent of the median income (of \$14,288) of white husband-wife families with wives not in the labor force.

In both types of two-parent families, however, the gap between black and white families narrowed somewhat during the last two years. The median income of black husband-wife families with wives in the labor force was 80 percent of the income of their white counterparts in 1974, while the median income of black husband-wife families with wives not in the labor force was 64 percent of the income of their white counterparts in 1974. Thus, the income gap between black and white two-parent families has not widened in recent years.

On the other hand, the income gap between black and white one-parent families has widened. In 1975, the median income of black female-headed families (\$4,898) was 64 percent of the income (\$7,651) of white female-headed families. But by 1976, the income gap had widened to 62 percent between black (\$5,069) and white (\$8,226) female-headed families.

#### Middle-Income Families

How have middle-income black families fared under the twin evils of unemployment and inflation? Since middle-income black families disproportionately consist of two-parent families with both parents in the labor force, it appears that such families have made some progress in recent years. In 1974, only 22 percent of all black

families had incomes above the Bureau of Labor Statistics' intermediate budget level of \$14,333. But, by 1976, 25 percent of all black families had incomes above the BLS' intermediate budget level of \$16,236. Thus, fully one-fourth of all black families can be considered in the economic middle-class today, compared to about half of all white families.<sup>7/</sup>

On the other hand, the proportion of upper-income black families has remained virtually constant in recent years. Only ten percent of all black families had incomes above the BLS' higher budget level of \$20,777 in 1974, and about the same proportion (nine percent) had incomes above the BLS' higher budget level of \$23,759 in 1976. Among white families, however, the proportion of families above the BLS' higher levels declined from 26 percent to 23 percent between 1974 and 1976. Apparently, upper-income families, among blacks and whites, are having difficulty maintaining their standards of living in this economy.<sup>8/</sup>

#### Low-Income Families

While the proportion of middle-income black families has been increasing, the proportion of low-income black families has also been growing. Between 1975 and 1976, the number of persons in black families who were below the official poverty level increased by 100,000 (from 1.5 to 1.6 million), raising the proportion of poor persons in black families from 27 to 28 percent. At the same time, however, the number of poor persons in white families declined by 200,000 (from 3.8 to 3.6 million) between 1975 and 1976, reducing



the proportion of poor persons in white families from 8 to 7 percent. Thus, whites experienced their record-level poverty in 1975, while blacks attained their highest levels of poverty in 1976.

Closer examination reveals, however, that the extent of poverty has been increasing faster among families headed by black women than among those headed by men. Between 1975 and 1976, both the number (about 500,000) and proportion (14 percent) of poor families headed by black men remained essentially unchanged, while the number and proportion of poor families headed by white men was sharply decreasing. On the other hand, the number of poor families headed by black women increased sharply from 1.0 to 1.1 million, between 1975 and 1976, raising the proportion of families headed by black women that were poor from 50 to 52 percent. But, the number and proportion of poor families headed by white women fell sharply over the same period.

The poverty status of black families is directly related to unemployment status and lack of participation in the labor force. In 1976, only nine percent of black families headed by employed men were poor, while 23 percent of the black families headed by unemployed men were poor and 31 percent of the families headed by black men who were not in the labor force were below the official poverty level.

But unemployment status is a more significant determinant of poverty status in families headed by black women. While almost three-fourths (71%) of the black families headed by unemployed women were poor in 1976, only one-fourth (26%) of the black families headed by employed women were poor. In other words,

the chances of black female heads of families being poor are only one out of four when they are employed, but their chances are three out of four when they do not have jobs. Clearly, the major vehicle for preventing black female heads of families from falling into poverty is to provide them with meaningful employment opportunities. Governmental policy should make it a national priority to provide full employment opportunities for female heads as well.<sup>9/</sup>

It should also be noted that unemployed black family heads are much more likely to be poor today than was true in the past. For example, while 17 percent of the families headed by unemployed black men were poor in 1975, 26 percent were poor in 1976. And, while 66 percent of the families headed by unemployed black women were poor in 1975, 71 percent were poor in 1976.

#### Children in Poverty

How many black children are being reared in poverty today? Is the number increasing or decreasing? Because of the falling fertility rates among both black and white women, the number of children in families has been steadily declining. This has also been true in poor families as well. Between 1975 and 1976, for example, the number of poor children in black families dropped from 3.9 million to 3.8 million, while the number of poor children in white families fell even more sharply from 6.7 million to 6.0 million. Consequently, the proportion of all black children in poor families slipped down from 41 percent in 1975 to 40 percent in 1976, while the

proportion of all white children in poor families went from 13 percent to 11 percent.

Since female-headed families are much more likely to be poor than male-headed families, it is to be expected that poor children are disproportionately being reared in families headed by women. In fact, three-fourths of all poor black children in 1976 were in families headed by women, compared to half of all poor white children in families. This is a slight increase since 1975 and 70 percent of all poor black children were in female-headed families, compared to 42 percent of all poor white children.

The increasing numbers of poor children in black families headed by women is directly related to declining employment opportunities for black female family heads. For in 1969, only 18 percent of all black children were in families headed by women who were either unemployed or not in the labor force, but by 1976, one-fourth (26%) of all black children were in families headed by women who were unemployed or not in the labor force.

Although this trend is not as strong in two-parent families, it is there, nevertheless. For, while only 7 percent of all black children in 1969 were in husband-wife families in which the father was either unemployed or not in the labor force, 11 percent of all black children were in such two-parent families in 1976. In fact, while only one-fourth of all black children in 1969 (in both two-parent and one-parent families) were in families in which the heads were unemployed or not in the labor force, two-fourths (37%) of all

black children were in such families in 1976. Since the economic situation has worsened among families headed by black women since 1976, it is highly likely that less than half of all black children today are in families in which their parents are unemployed or not in the the labor force.10/

#### Families on Welfare

It is interesting to note that, in spite of the increasing poverty status of black families, particularly those headed by women, the proportion of black families receiving public assistance has declined, and not increased, in recent years. For, in 1974, 27 percent of all black families were on welfare, but in 1975, the proportion of black families on welfare had fallen to 22 percent.

This decline occurred among both two-parent and one-parent black families. For the proportion of all female-headed black families receiving public assistance declined from 55 percent to 47 percent between 1974 and 1975, while the proportion of male-headed black families on welfare fell from 12 to seven percent.11/

Even more interesting was the fact that fewer poor black families were receiving public assistance in the recession year of 1975 than there were in 1974. The proportion of all poor black families receiving public assistance dropped from 60 percent in 1974 to 54 percent in 1975. Some of this apparent decline may be due to the fact that recipients of Old Age Assistance who were included in welfare figures in 1974 were not included in those statistics in 1975, since they had been transferred to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

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However, since only a small fraction of black family heads are elderly, a significant decline in public assistance among most black families appears to have taken place between 1974 and 1975. Some of this decline in the dependence of black families on public assistance may be due to increased support from extended family and kin.

#### The Black Extended Family

The extended family has proven to be a major bulwark for the survival and advancement of blacks from slavery to the present. The pervasive mutual aid networks in the black community have helped thousands of black families to effectively confront the vicissitudes of life by pooling and sharing meager social and economic resources.<sup>12/</sup>

A major means of sharing resources during economic crises has been a sharp increase in "doubling-up" among black families. And the 1974-75 recession undoubtedly caused a resurgence of relatives moving in with one another -- especially among female-headed families with children. For in 1969, only 22 percent of black children who lived in households headed by relatives were there with only their mother. But, by 1974, 33 percent of black children living in the households of relatives were there in sub-families with only their mother. And by 1975, the proportion of black children living in such extended family arrangements soared to 39 percent. Clearly, increasing numbers of black women heading families with children found it necessary to move in with relatives (most often, their own parents) in order to pool or stabilize their limited economic resources. Such "doubling-up"



however, makes it more difficult for sub-families with children in these extended family arrangements to qualify for public assistance. This may help to explain some of the decline in the public assistance among black families between 1974 and 1975. Unfortunately, many poor families are unjustly being denied public assistance because they have had to move in with relatives. It is vital that governmental regulations be made more sensitive to reinforce and not weaken strong kinship bonds. 13/

In addition to pooling resources, the mutual aid kinship network among blacks also provides vital informal day care services to children to permit their parents to work. In fact, half (52%) of all black children between 3-13 years old, whose mothers are in the labor force, are cared for by relatives, while only 16 percent are cared for by non-relatives and only three percent attend a formal day care center. Such informal day care services by relatives are most vital to low-income families who cannot afford to send their children to a formal day care facility. This is evident in the fact that unemployed mothers have even greater reliance on day care services by relatives. Two-thirds of all black children whose mothers are unemployed depend on relatives to take care of them.

Unfortunately, such self-help day care services by relatives are not reinforced by federal policies to the extent they should be. In fact, until quite recently, federal income tax regulations prevented any working women who depended on relatives for day care services from deducting such expenses on their income tax forms.

The only expenses that were allowed were those incurred by parents who had their children cared for by non-relatives or had been placed in a formal day care facility. But, as we noted above, about half of all black children with working mothers depend on relatives (most often, the grandmothers or aunts of the children) to care for their children and they frequently have to pay relatives for these services. 14/

However, income tax regulations for 1977 have been modified somewhat to allow deduction for child care by relatives under certain specified conditions. Some of these specifications, which have an "anti-grandmother" quality, still make it difficult for many black families to take advantage of these new provisions. More important, however, is the fact that most low-income families do not make enough to be able to make any income tax deductions — whether their children are with relatives, non-relatives or in a day care center. What is needed is a tax credit for child care expenses that is especially targeted for low-income families that heavily depend on relatives to provide vital day care functions. 15/

#### Family Structure

Apparently, the record-level inflation of 1973-75, coupled with the 1974-75 recession has made it increasingly difficult for two-parent families, among both blacks and whites, to remain together. The divorce rate, for example, reached record levels in both 1974 and 1975. In 1974, the number of divorces totaled 970,000, but it

exceeded one million (1,026,000 in 1975 -- for the first time in the nation's history. Consequently, the divorce rate rose from 4.6 to a record high 4.8 per 1,000 resident population between 1974 and 1975. Provisional HEW estimates for 1976 indicate that both the number and rate of divorces in the nation continued to rise. About 1,077,000 divorces were granted in 1976, raising the divorce rate to 5.0 per 1,000 population.

As a result of increasing divorce and separation, the number of female-headed families has risen about the same extent among black and white families. Between 1974 and 1977, the number of female-headed black families increased by 16 percent (from 1.8 million to 2.1 million) while the number of female-headed white families rose by 13 percent (from 4.9 million to 5.5 million) over that three-year period. Consequently, the proportion of all black families that were headed by women rose from 34 percent to 37 percent between 1974 and 1977, while the proportion of all white families that were headed by women went from 10 to 11 percent.<sup>16/</sup>

The sharp increase in female-headed families due to marital disruption is even more evident when one observes trends in the marital status of such women. In 1970, for example, only 37 percent of all white women heading families were separated or divorced, but by 1976, 51 percent of all white women heads of families were separated or divorced. Among black women, however, there has only been a slight increase in the proportion of black women heads of families who were separated or divorced between 1970 (48 percent) and 1976 (49 percent).

With the increase in female-headed families, the proportion of children in two-parent families has steadily declined. In 1970, 58 percent of all black children lived with both parents, but by 1976, only 50 percent of all black children lived with both parents. Among whites the proportion of children living with both parents dropped from 89 percent to 85 percent between 1970 and 1976. Thus, increasing numbers of children among both blacks and whites are being reared by one parent or other parent surrogates.

#### CONCLUSIONS

In sum, although there are signs of some degree of economic recovery in the nation, as a whole, no such recovery has reached the black community. Black unemployment in 1977 -- even as officially defined -- was the highest level ever recorded for blacks. While most white workers have been experiencing a decline in unemployment, joblessness has been on the rise among black women heads of families and among black teenagers. In fact, black female heads of families are receiving the major brunt of the current recession/depression.

With declining employment opportunities for adult black women, the proportion of black families with two or more earners has steadily declined. Consequently, the income gap between black and white families is widening, and not narrowing.

The number of poor black families is at record levels today, while the number of children in poor one-parent black families continue to rise. And, about less than half of all black children

today are in families in which their parents are unemployed or not in the labor force.

Increasing numbers of black families have had to rely on extended family and kin support. Unfortunately, governmental policies tend to weaken these kinship bonds, instead of strengthening them.

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FOOTNOTES

- 1/ For a fuller description of the NUL Hidden Unemployment Index, see any issue of the National Urban League Research Department, NUL Quarterly Economic Report on the Black Worker.
- 2/ For an earlier assessment of the impact of the 1974-75 recession on black workers and their families, see NUL Research Department, Black Families in the 1974-75 Depression (Washington, D. C., NUL Research Department, 1975). Also see Faustine Jones' excellent analysis of the economic crisis among blacks in her recent work, The Changing Mood in America (Washington, D. C., Howard University Press, 1977).
- 3/ See NUL Research Department, "No Economic Recovery for Blacks," Special Policy Report, July, 1976.
- 4/ Black Families in the 1974-75 Depression, op. cit.
- 5/ Ibid.
- 6/ Ibid.
- 7/ Ibid.
- 8/ See Robert B. Hill, Inflation and the Black Consumer (Washington, D.C., NUL Research Department, 1974).
- 9/ Current governmental employment policies fail to assign high priority or urgency to providing meaningful jobs to female heads of families, especially among minority groups. Most recommendations tend to center on youth or male breadwinners. Those that do revolve about female heads of families almost totally focus on families that are already on welfare. Apparently, little attention is given to providing jobs to female family heads to prevent them from having to go on welfare in the first place.
- 10/ See the various U.S. Bureau of the Census publications on the social and economic status of American families in its Current Publication Reports: "Household and Family Characteristics, March, 1976," Series P-20, No. 311; "Marital Status and Living Arrangements, March, 1976," Series P-20, No. 306; "Money Income in 1975 of Families and Persons in the U.S." Series P-20, No. 105; "Characteristics of the Population Below the Poverty Level: 1975, Series P-60, No. 106; "Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the U.S., 1976, "Advance Report", Series P-60, No. 107.
- 11/ Black Families in the 1974-75 Depression, op.cit.

- 12/ For an in depth analysis of the functions provided by black extended families, see Robert B. Hill, Informal Adoption Among Black Families (Washington, D.C.: NUL Research Department, 1977).
- 13/ Ibid., also see Robert B. Hill and Lawrence Shackelford, "The Black Extended Family Revisited," Urban League Review, Vol. 1., No. 2 (Fall, 1975) pp. 18-24. An excellent, comprehensive analysis of the role of black extended families is also provided by Carol Stack in her work, "All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in A Black Community" (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).
- 14/ See NUL Research Department, "1972 Income Tax Deductions on Child Care Who Benefits?" April, 1973.
- 15/ Hill, Informal Adoption Among Black Families, op. cit.
- 16/ NUL Research Department, "Black Families in 1974-75 Depression," op. cit., and "Income and Poverty Among Blacks: 1974" Urban League Review, Vol. 1., No. 2 (Fall, 1975); pp. 55-58; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings and unpublished unemployment data; U.S. Department of HEW, Monthly Vital Statistics Report, "Provisional Statistics, Annual Summary for the United States, 1976: Births, Deaths, Marriages and Divorces," PHS 78-1120, Vol. 25, No. 13, December 12, 1977.

# # #

EDUCATION

by

Dr. Bernard C. Watson

Analyses of black enrollment in nursery, kindergarten, junior high and high schools indicate significant progress over the past decade. By 1977, black enrollment in nursery and kindergarten exceeded 35 percent of those eligible while white enrollment traditionally below blacks, was slightly more than 31 percent of those eligible. Based upon available figures the gap between black and white pre-school enrollment had been narrowed to something in the neighborhood of three percent, due in large measure to the increased availability of pre-school programs in public school systems across the country, but due primarily to provisions for these programs in many southern states.

Increased high school enrollment by black teenagers, coupled with higher retention rates, has resulted in increased educational attainment as measured by number of years of education completed. For the decade 1966-1976, total high school enrollment rose by 18 percent while private school enrollment -- mostly white -- dropped by 13 percent.<sup>1</sup> The high school enrollment rate for whites increased 3.9 percent between 1970 - 1976 while black enrollment recorded a significantly higher percentage, 23.1 percent.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, between 1970 - 1975, the proportion of students, graduating from high school was significantly higher for blacks than for whites, thus

narrowing the educational gap. By 1976, 80 percent of blacks, 16-17 years of age, were enrolled in school compared to 89.1 percent of whites of the same age.<sup>3</sup> Analyses of dropout rates for both groups provide further evidence of progress. For this same age group the dropout rate for whites is approximately 8.4 percent and for blacks, 9.5 percent.<sup>4</sup>

Once they have entered high school, however, the gap widens and the figures assume an ominous significance. At ages 18 and 19, 22 percent of black youth are still attending high school compared to eight percent of white youth.<sup>5</sup> Another 25 percent of black youth in this age group do not complete high school compared to only 15 percent of white youth.<sup>6</sup>

Obviously, these figures affect college enrollment for black Americans. Although the number and percentage of black Americans enrolled in college has increased, the gap between white and black college attendance is much wider than that for elementary and secondary schools. Still, progress has been significant. During the decade 1966-1976, black college enrollment increased from 4.6 percent to 10.7 percent.<sup>7</sup> The percentage of blacks reaching the senior year also increased from five percent in 1970 to eight percent in 1975.<sup>8</sup>

#### Education and Black Americans: Beyond Statistics

It is clear that participation in education is essential to the realization of its benefits. Therefore, school enrollment data are

always enlightening. Although black Americans constitute approximately 11 percent of the total population of this country, they are overrepresented in the public schools. Black enrollment in private schools is highest for students from families with incomes over \$15,000. With the exception of the western region of the United States where both white and black enrollment in private schools is low, there are substantial differences in private school attendance with white enrollment far exceeding that of blacks.

Examination of private school enrollment patterns clearly reveals that for most black Americans, public schools remain the most viable, if not the only, option for participation in education. Enrollment and attendance patterns confirm once again that black Americans remain firmly committed to the view that each person is entitled to get as much education as possible. Thus, access to educational opportunities remains a critically important policy issue for black Americans.

Although demographers predict that the elementary school age population will continue to decline, the percentage of blacks in public schools continues to increase. It is estimated that by 1980, 15.4 percent of the public school enrollment will be black. But black Americans are concentrated in a comparatively few, poorly financed urban public school systems. For example, 571, 146 or 16.8 percent of New York State's 3,393,983 students in grades K-12 are black and 95 percent of these black students attend school in eleven (11) of the 740 school districts within New York.<sup>9</sup> The concentration of black Americans can be more dramatically illustrated



by pointing out that more students attend public schools in New York City than in the states of Wyoming, West Virginia, New Mexico, Idaho and Rhode Island combined. But these statistics are of particular significance to black Americans because similar statements can be made of the other ten larger public school systems in the country, each of which serves a majority black enrollment. Demographic and economic trends provide evidence that such enrollment patterns are likely to continue into the 1980's.

#### Financing Public Education

The impacted enrollments in our urban public school systems underscores the fact that in 1977, school finance issues again surfaced as one of the most important policy issues for black Americans. In 1977 cities continued their tendency to spend a smaller proportion of their total budget on education than do their suburban counterparts. Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Denver, Colorado; Boston, Massachusetts; Kansas City, Missouri are examples of urban areas which spend somewhat less than their suburban counterparts on education, but at least twice as much on non-educational functions.

State aid to education is popularly thought to be intended to equalize school expenditures and tax burdens for education. State aid, however, is typically not sufficient to overcome local disparities in spending for education. The result is high taxes and low expenditures for poor school districts, which tend to have high or majority black student enrollment, and lower taxes and better-financed schools in wealthier districts which tend to have majority white, middle-class enrollments.

The funding of public education has traditionally operated to provide the children of the affluent with a better quality of education than the children of the poor. That state of affairs continues in 1978.

More than 30 years ago Havighurst and Loeb observed:<sup>10</sup>

"The American School... reflects the socio-economic order in everything that it does; in what it teaches, who does the teaching, who does the hiring and firing of teachers, and what the children learn in and out of the classroom... The curricula of the secondary schools provide early pathways to success and failure, they operate in a different way on the several class levels, and they are used in a different way by the children of the higher and lower levels."

More recently, a number of researchers have documented the relationship between students' socio-economic status and the amount of school resources made available to them:<sup>11</sup>

"There is empirical evidence that school districts allocate substantially fewer dollars to schools in poor and black neighborhoods, indeed, within-district disparities may be as significant as disparities in a given state."

Discrimination against black and other minority children in the allocation of educational resources continues. The Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law recently completed a study of the underfunding of majority black school districts in the South and found that resource disparities between majority white and majority black districts have grown considerably since desegregation:<sup>12</sup>

"In many majority black districts which lost large numbers of white students to private segregation academies, public officials have been unwilling to levy local property taxes adequate to support the public schools at a level equal to that provided in comparable districts serving predominately white student bodies. In addition to low tax effort,

majority black districts also tend to be poor in property wealth and personal income. Low effort and low wealth reinforce each other to maximize inequalities between majority black and majority white districts."

Black and other minority children who attend schools in large urban areas are receiving diminished educational programs as their districts are faced with huge budget deficits. These deficits occur despite school finance reforms in a number of states precisely because those reforms have ignored the unique fiscal and educational problems of the cities.

The reality of ever-increasing costs and eroding revenue bases have placed big city systems and the students they serve at a decided educational disadvantage. According to a report released in September, 1977 by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the nation's 89 largest city school districts face stagnating city tax bases while the proportion of disadvantaged students requiring high-cost education programs are growing. These cities, the report concludes, are threatened by "fiscal chaos."<sup>13</sup>

While there are a multitude of urban educational concerns which are of short-and long-range importance, the immediate crisis in big city school systems is that of keeping schools open in the face of lack of funds. The exact circumstances in various cities differ, but the fundamental problems are the same:

- In 1976, Chicago, the second largest school system in the nation was forced to close 16 days early when it fell nearly \$50 million below its needed revenue level.
- Schools in Cleveland, Ohio were expected to close in October, 1977 because of a budget deficit, but were ordered to remain open by Federal Judge Frank Battisti, because of court-ordered desegregation. Teachers were not paid on November 23, 1977.

- Toledo, Ohio schools were closed on October 28th due to lack of funds, but were reopened November 9, 1977 after passage of a new school tax levy.
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania public schools eliminated some 3000 teaching positions and were almost forced to close in October, 1977 when a \$50 million bank loan was declared illegal by the State Supreme Court..

### Analysis

The few examples listed above are indicative of the increasingly severe fiscal problems besetting urban school districts. While the circumstances in each city are slightly different, there are some systemic problems which are common to the state finance plans in each case.

Ohio, Pennsylvania, Colorado and Michigan all base the amount of state instructional aid upon local tax rates for education -- the higher the tax rate for schools, the more aid per pupil allotted to a district. This type of formula has been adopted in many states over the past five years as a response to "fiscal neutrality" criteria generated by recent school finance suits. As articulated in Serrano, the intent is that the level of education offered in any particular district not be a function of wealth other than the wealth of the state as a whole. Unfortunately, legislative plans which have sought to guarantee "equal yield for equal effort" have narrowly defined measures of both effort and wealth and have often ignored the concern of differential costs.

The result is disqualifying for urban areas which exhibit the following characteristics:

- (1) high tax rates for non-educational services (municipal overburden) and relatively lower tax rates for education;
- (2) high property values, yet low income of residents;
- (3) large proportions of disadvantaged pupils who require more costly educational programs;
- (4) higher costs for equivalent services -- e.g., salaries, construction costs, etc.

While at least 22 states have revised their school finance schemes since Serrano, many have not taken into account the special educational and fiscal needs of high density, high cost districts and systems which serve disproportionately large numbers of children in need of more expensive educational programs. Since 1971, only three additional states have funded compensatory education programs and the total state funding of bilingual education is still critically below the federal contribution of \$78 million. Only Maryland, Michigan and Pennsylvania have made formula adjustments for cost-of-living differentials and Michigan stands alone in trying to lessen the pressure of municipal tax overburden. Unless state legislative reforms take into account the pressures of municipal tax and education need overburdens, we will not see substantial equalization of educational opportunity.<sup>14</sup>

The point should be made that Serrano-type fiscal neutrality solutions will not necessarily solve the problems of urban school districts. The solution must go further: the state should ensure that the resources in a district are commensurate with the educational



tasks and costs in the district. This is the claim being pressed in the Cincinnati suit and in the New York intervenors' suit in Levittown v. Nyquist.

#### Minorities and School Finance

The role of black Americans and other minorities in school finance reform must be expanded.

"...(S)chool finance is not necessarily partisan. (It is)...broad-based, and the pressures for reform are general. Yet paradoxically, school finance legislation is highly technical information and expertise constitutes power, and they usually belong to a select group."<sup>15</sup>

The reluctance of many states to institute needed reforms is probably less an indication of legislative disinterest than a reflection of political pressure and their perception of the "state of the art." Even though cost-of-living and income adjustments, educational need weighting and municipal overburden factors in state aid formulas promise substantial assistance to urban and poor districts, they are unrefined and politically-controversial. They are in clear need of further development and are, therefore, ripe subjects for further research and legislative deliberation.

Yet, the predominant education decision-making structure effectively precludes input from the minority community. The growing complexity and differentiation of the educational enterprise requires ever more specialization and, as a result, policy-making responsibility increasingly devolves to more and more centralized decisional bodies. The possibility

of making significant contributions to the development of education and school finance reform policy is, therefore, conditioned on (1) a knowledge of the issues; (2) an understanding of specialized language and (3) strategic access to the centers of decision-making power. But, as the policy considerations of legislators, board members and educators have become more intricate, education consumers and even newly-installed minority legislators have become further removed from a clear understanding and appreciation of the processes and outcomes of reform deliberations. Whether by accident or design, the result has been a general exclusion of non-specialists and also an insulation of techniques from public scrutiny. The general public is affected by this problem; however, minorities and the poor are most adversely affected.

Poor and minority residents rarely have sufficient access to critical information that will allow them to make informed personal choices among public policy alternatives. Education and school finance information which does filter to these residents is more often a reflection of the political stance of the organization distributing the message than a clear interpretation of the stake the urban and minority poor have in the outcome of the debates. As a result, residents often choose not to participate in what they consider campaigns of manipulation and propaganda.

When there is a call for the nominal involvement of low-income residents, the communication is often one way in nature. Because they are considered, and often are, unsophisticated in the workings of the decision-making network, minorities and the poor are discouraged from

taking part in problem-solving and may, in fact, become uncomfortable with the technical language of the "experts."

The situation regarding urban and minority legislators is similar. The general failure of these legislators to sow the fields and thereby reap the benefits of school finance reform probably results from either a lack of understanding of the complexities and fiscal rewards of reform, or a lack of reliable technical assistance.

Despite the fact that many school finance suits have been brought on behalf of the urban and minority residents or that they stand to gain considerably from the outcome of reforms, there is still a critical shortage of technically skilled minorities contributing to the development and analysis of school finance policy. School finance research organizations rarely tap the skills of minority researchers. Nor has there been a major concerted effort to train minorities in the areas of school finance and public policy research. Consequently, urban and minority legislators have yet to take a front line position in the battle for school finance reform. The current lack of minority expertise, the absence of minority representation on reform policy-making bodies and the blanket of silence surrounding complex and technical reform deliberations have often combined to effectively strip urban and, minority residents of any real contribution to the final outcome of reform proposals. However, there can be little hope that the peculiar fiscal and educational problems confronting urban and minority-concentrated districts will be effectively resolved without actively involving urban and minority representatives in the development, implementation and evaluation of reform plans.

### The Quality of Education

Having noted the progress black Americans have made in years of education completed, the more important question of quality must be discussed. Blacks and other minorities are concentrated in public schools located in cities and the urban areas of this country and these are precisely the areas beset with major problems, among which finance is one. But we must also confront the fact that the education too many children receive in these classrooms is nothing short of a national scandal, an absolute disgrace. In too many schools achievement levels are three, four, even five years below the average nationwide. High school graduates are unable to read, write or perform mathematical functions at the sixth or eighth grade level. Many are unable to perform simple, everyday tasks such as filling in an application for employment or writing a simple coherent paragraph. Truancy is epidemic, psychological or physical dropping-out, commonplace. Add to this the fact that many of the corridors, bathrooms and school yards are actually dangerous for both teachers and students. Costs soar, so school board after school board is forced to eliminate such "frills" as music, art, physical education, library services and, in some cases, kindergarten. The quality of programs and the performance of students decline. One is tempted to argue that the most significant, perhaps the most important, innovation which could be installed in public schools in this country would be programs and teaching strategies which provide all students with basic literacy! The effect of such an innovation on employment, self-confidence and stability in human

relationships would be immeasurable. In the cities, such an innovation might begin to restore public confidence in public education, something which has diminished significantly as school systems have become increasingly non-white.

An important question is the relationship between school finance reform and improvement in the delivery and quality of education. Despite the attention given to this question in the media, research and public discussion have only recently centered on the specific problems of urban districts and districts serving large numbers of minority pupils in the pre- and current reform eras.

#### Competency Legislation and Disadvantaged Youth

A significant development taking shape on the heels of fiscal reforms is the growing push for competency legislation, which require that students must exhibit a certain level of competency before they can graduate. The underlying reason for the push toward achievement standards is obvious. Relative decreases in state revenue collections, spiraling educational costs and widespread reports of decreasing student performance have joined to make parents keenly aware that education is a consumer concern. As taxpayers, they want fair value for their taxes. Legislators and education officials are attempting to respond to that concern.

At least ten (10) states have sought to establish some kind of competency requirement. But many have attempted to correct the situation at the graduation ceremony. New York State and Arizona graduates must read at the ninth grade level. Virginia, Louisiana and Oregon are also developing minimal graduation requirements.



California has developed a certificate of proficiency based on a four-hour, 200-item test of reading, writing and computational skills. The examination is designed to permit early school leaving. Simultaneously, major California cities are pursuing the development of minimum graduation requirements. As recently as last February, Pennsylvania was considering testing children in basic skills and making a permanent record of student scores. In Georgia, district ratings depend on student basic skills achievement relative to the state average. Similar reform strategies are being developed at the local level in Gary, Indiana; Greenville County, Virginia; Duval County, Florida and in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Denver, Colorado graduation requirement, now fifteen (15) years old, and probably the oldest in the nation, mandates ninth grade reading competency for graduation.

Yet, significantly, the imposition of graduation competency requirements places the onus of poor performance exclusively on the child. Thus, the burden of improvement rests only with the recipient of educational services. Because of the subtle race and class-based structure of teacher training, textbook content, curricula and other important factors in the delivery of education, we cannot rationally develop policies which deny their existence.

Moreover, unless current measures to institute competency requirements are balanced by foresight concerning their broader psycho- social and economic consequences, and unless such efforts are open to the widest possible forum for discussion in order to include spokesmen for disadvantaged youth, particularly, the results

will likely be devastating. The inclination to proceed as if the mere passage of legislation will somehow correct basic systemic deficiencies appears to be gaining widespread popularity. The effort to insure that schools provide children at least minimum preparation for adult life must not be allowed to degenerate into a movement back to the social ignorance of the pre-1960's. Graduation "floors" are not enough. What is required is nothing less than a systematic retooling of fiscal and administrative procedures and changes in the delivery of educational services at the level of the individual child.

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#### HIGHER EDUCATION

As noted earlier, there has been a significant increase in the number and percentage of black Americans attending colleges and universities of all types. During the decade 1966-1976 black college enrollment increased from 4.6 percent to 10.7 percent, and by 1975, 8 percent of the students enrolled in the senior year of college were black.<sup>16</sup> 1,062,000 black Americans were enrolled in post-secondary institutions during 1977, but 60 percent of that total enrollment was in two-year community and junior colleges or in vocational and technical institutions. Of the 40 percent who were enrolled in four-year, post-secondary degree-granting institutions, 50 percent (or more than 200,000) were attending one of the 107 historically black colleges universities. The other 50 percent attended predominately white colleges throughout the country.<sup>17</sup>

It is apparent that the historically black institutions of higher education continue to play a significant and vital role in the education of black Americans. Not only have these institutions provided the largest single source of educated blacks in law, medicine, dentistry and pharmacy, they continue to produce approximately 50 percent of the blacks receiving baccalaureate degrees. Moreover, enrollment at these institutions is increasing. Between 1970 and 1974, enrollment in historically black colleges and universities increased by 40.9 percent and the combined enrollment in these institutions represented 2.6 percent of

all students in colleges and universities in the United States.<sup>18</sup> Clearly, the historically black colleges represent a national resource; they are critical to continued access to higher education for black Americans.

Black colleges, however, have had their financial problems and the problems continue. In 1969 only 2.9 percent of federal aid to higher education went to black colleges. By 1973 the percentage rose to 5.6 percent or a total of \$250,094,400 of a total of almost \$4.5 billion in total aid. Forty-one percent of all federal aid to black colleges during the year 1972 was in the form of federally-funded student aid programs. During the period 1971-1973 institutional aid to black colleges increased from \$20 million to \$535 million.<sup>19</sup> Both of these developments showed progress in support of higher education for black Americans. It should be noted, however, that federal aid for construction, facilities and equipment for black colleges decreased from \$20 million to \$9 million and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Department of Agriculture, the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Housing and Urban Development all registered decreases during the same period.<sup>20</sup>

This pattern of uneven support for historically black colleges has grave implications for black Americans' access to higher education. Most historically black colleges are small and primarily undergraduate institutions. Eighty percent of the students attending these institutions come from low-income families which earn less than

\$8,000 yearly.<sup>21</sup> These data illuminate two policy issues which are of critical importance for black Americans: financial aid policies and admissions policies.

The overwhelming majority of black Americans come from families whose estimated yearly income is less than \$10,000. In 1974, 68 percent of the college freshmen in historically black colleges came from such families; only 8.5 percent came from families whose estimated parental income exceeded \$20,000.<sup>22</sup> Census data also indicate that the source of income for most black American students is from loans, scholarships and governmental programs (Basic Educational Opportunity Grant, Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grant, Social Security, etc.). White students on the other hand, received much of their support from personal savings, parental contributions and earnings. Nevertheless, most financial aid in all categories is awarded to white students. The implications are obvious: without substantial financial aid from sources other than the family, black Americans would enjoy severely limited opportunities for participation in higher education.

An obvious, but often overlooked, implication of the deprived economic status of most black Americans is the fact that most existing financial aid programs including Basic Opportunity Educational Grant, National Defense Student Loan and Veterans Administration programs do not provide enough aid for broad educational options. Tuition, fees, and room and board costs at most prestigious and highly selective institutions preclude attendance by many blacks who might otherwise attend such institutions. Thus many black Americans may be forced to select colleges primarily on the basis of where they can afford to attend, not where they might qualify and choose to attend.



But financial problems associated with college attendance is only one aspect of the problem. Black Americans tend to be concentrated in certain fields and are underrepresented or, in some cases, unrepresented in others. More important, those fields with the greatest underrepresentation are in growth areas and/or fields of greatest need in the economy generally and in the black community specifically. Thus, any measurement of black advancement has to be qualified. If by advancement, movement forward is the index, then blacks have advanced. Such a one-dimensional focus says little or nothing of the efforts of blacks to obtain representative equality.

Since blacks constitute 11.4 percent of the total U.S. population, if their percentage in the professions were consistent with their percentage in the overall population, one would expect at least 11.4 percent representation in the professions. The data indicate, however, that not only are blacks not close to this target, but there appears to be an emergent trend away from representative equality.

Black enrollment in law schools (Figure 1) has increased from 2.95 percent in 1969-1970 to 4.4 percent in 1976-1977. This progress, 1.45 percentage points, took eight years to achieve and the result constitutes less than one-half the number one would expect based upon representative equality (11.4 percent). The number of entering law students, 1976-1977, has increased compared to 1975-1976, but an investigation of the academic progress of the class of 1974-1975 presents a different picture. The class of 1974-1975 began with 1,910 students. By the second year, there was a loss of 399 or 20.9 percent of the entering class. The retention rate was much better by the

third year with only a 1.5 percent loss. But examination of the retention rate of third-year students for the school year 1975-1976 and 1976-1977 reveals a numerical difference of 36 persons which translated to a percentage black enrollment of 4.40 percent over the previous year (4.18 percent). This analysis highlights the importance of knowing the numerical base as well as the percentage increase.

If one follows a first-year class, beginning in 1971-1972, there is an approximate but consistent decrease of 400-500 students by the second year. The decrease from second to third year is approximately 100. Thus, over the three-year period of law school attendance, there is a numerical loss of approximately 600 black Americans.

During the period 1972-1973 - 1975-1976, black medical school enrollments (Figure 2) increased from 5.4 percent to 6.1 percent. The increase for all minorities during the same time interval increased from 8.3 percent to 10.9 percent. These figures show a gain of 2.6 percent over the four-year period for all minorities compared to a .7 percent increase for blacks. In fact, since 1974-1975 black Americans have experienced a percentage decline while the percentage for all minorities was increasing. The figures show a decrease of .1 percent by 1976-1977 for blacks compared to a .2 percent increase for all minorities.

Examination of first-year black medical students (Figure 3) demonstrates a numerical and percentage decline since 1974-1975. Between 1974 and 1977 (DeFunis ruling from Supreme Court) 1975 (Bakke filed suit) — there has been a numerical increase of only four black students nationally over the previous year.

The general decline of blacks in medical school is attested to by overall percentage loss, 7.0 percent, 1972-1973, to 6.7 percent in 1976-1977, a differential of .3 percentage points. While the black rate declined, minorities, which include blacks, are increasing with less and less of a black proportion even though blacks are the most populous minority. To illustrate, in 1972-1973, the percentage difference between black and total minority was 3.5 percent but four years later the differential is 5.4 percent.

The types of medical residency blacks serve are worth noting (Figure 4). The specialities with the highest level of participation by blacks continue to be general surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, and internal medicine, respectively. There were, on the other hand, only three black plastic surgeon graduates in 1973 in this country, Canada and foreign countries. The results are similar for the nine other categories listed in Figure 4. The record is not likely to get better as long as the apparent trend of fewer blacks applying and being admitted to medical school continues.

The record for blacks in dental and pharmaceutical schools (Figure 5 and 6, respectively) is even lower than law and medical schools. Total enrollment for blacks, 4.7 percent, 1974-1975, for dental school and 3.6 percent, 1972-1973, in pharmacy would be even lower if historically black schools did not train almost half of the black enrollees.

According to the National Advisory Council on Minorities in Engineering, blacks are the most poorly-represented minority. The percentage of

B.A. degrees awarded blacks increased since 1968-1969 from .79 percent to 1.83 percent in 1973-1974. A similar increase is recorded for the masters and doctoral levels, .11 percent to .99 percent; .06 percent to .36 percent, respectively (Figure 7). Examination of the ten engineering fields with the lowest black representation at the B.A. level (Figure 8) indicates a dismal record. For instance, nationally, there was only one black in environmental, geological, materials/metallurgy and nuclear engineering -- the very fields that will increasingly be called upon in the next decade. The percentage and numerical base of black bio-medical engineers for the entire country in 1974, was 4.0 percent of the total which numerically meant seven blacks. Engineering science with 14 blacks nationally represented 1.5 percent of the total. This further highlights the necessity to examine both percentages and numerical bases. There were fields with no black representation at all: agriculture, ceramic, mining and systems.

HEW figures published in 1977 (Figure 9) show a poor representation of blacks in all of the scientific fields. Of the eight fields cited, mathematical specialists had the highest percentage of black representation, 8.7 percent. Data from the other seven fields is even more depressing. To illustrate, there were 28,919 environmental scientists in this country in 1974 but only Forty-seven (47) were black (.2 percent -- less than 1 per state). By far this field had the worse proportion of blacks.

This summary is helpful in further understanding the status of blacks, but it is only one measure. Progress has been made, but it is clear that black Americans have a long way to go to achieve anything approaching equalizing educational opportunity, not to mention parity.

#### ADMISSIONS: THE BAKKE CASE

The Bakke Case, perhaps more than any event in recent history, has crystallized the issues of admission of minorities to higher education. This case, now pending before the U.S. Supreme Court, has generated controversy nationwide, has ruptured the historic coalition between liberals and minorities, and exacerbated sometimes tenuous relations between black and white Americans.

While reports in the media have stressed terms such as "reverse discrimination" and "quotas," this case must be viewed in historical perspective. Any fair reading of the statistics presented earlier in this paper will demonstrate that the underrepresentation of black Americans in medicine, law, dentistry, math, the sciences and in higher education generally is no accident. It is a result of preferential treatment to certain people: alumni, friends, relatives, males and others. It is also the result of a long history of outright negative discrimination against black Americans and other minorities. Few Americans dispute this history. If there is any single fact about America's history, it is that blacks and other minorities have been the victims of pervasive, unrelenting discrimination. Given this fact, there is something strange about claims and arguments that affirmative action programs designed to remedy the effects of past discrimination constitute "reverse discrimination," that limit the aspirations of white males. The Bakke Case, for all its complexity, raises one basic question the U.S. Supreme Court will have to answer: is it constitutionally permissible for a university to use race as one criterion for admission?



Bakke argues that institutions must be "color blind" and that race is not an acceptable or constitutionally-valid factor in admissions. But previous court decisions have established the constitutional principle that race may indeed be a factor in institutional policies if the intent is to redress the effects of past negative discrimination. It is difficult to imagine that the U.S. Supreme Court would easily abandon that principle, thus raising the fiction of a "color blind" society to the level of constitutional law. Do not be deceived, it would be fiction.

Consider these facts. Franklin Evans, in a study conducted for the Educational Testing Service, concluded that if schools followed racially-blind admissions policies, only one of five black Americans would have been admitted to law schools. A questionnaire was sent to 163 law schools -- 129 responded -- indicating that only 285 of the 1539 successful black applicants would have been admitted under a racially-blind admissions policy.<sup>23</sup> And those 1539 students who have been admitted are qualified: LSAT scores and undergraduate grade point averages of first-year law students are higher today than they were a decade ago. Minority students who have been admitted in 1976 have grades and scores equal to or higher than the median LSAT score at 100 of the nation's law schools in the Warkov Study.<sup>24</sup>

The situation is similar in medical schools. Writing in the New England Journal of Medicine, Dr. Arnold S. Relman reviews affirmative action programs in medical education. But he notes an alarming fact: Even with special admissions and affirmative action, the number of black physicians is still inadequate. Even more alarming is the fact

that the number of black Americans applying to medical schools has declined over the past decade.<sup>25</sup>

In higher education generally, the increase in the number of black Americans has been noted earlier, but some indication of performance is in order. In 1976, 748,000 black Americans were enrolled in colleges and universities compared to 6.3 million white Americans. More important, success rates for these black Americans approximated that for whites, due in part to academic support systems in colleges and universities. Even in the most selective and best schools, retention rates are almost equal and it is clear that there are no dual tracking systems or grade inflation in these institutions.

A recent study by Change Magazine looked at a sample of black students who, since 1961, had studied at selective institutions including Amherst, Princeton, Harvard, Stanford, Dartmouth, Duke, Oberlin, Yale and Wesleyan. Seventy percent had graduated, seven percent still enrolled and 23 percent were no longer pursuing a degree. These black Americans had succeeded despite combined SAT scores that averaged 200 points below those of white students. Many graduated with honors despite, SAT scores of as much as 300-400 points below the college's median. These data suggest, at the very least, that SAT scores may underpredict the likelihood of success of black Americans.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the aforementioned progress, however, the research on black participation in graduate programs and professional schools is poor indeed. Viewed in this perspective, some of the arguments in support of Bakke seem ludicrous. After generations of inferior educational opportunities at the elementary and secondary level,

after generations of denial to equal access to higher education, after generations of limited opportunities to attend graduate and professional schools -- (and those who did have the opportunity, enrolled in historically-black institutions) -- black Americans are confronted with arguments that the society should be "color blind" and no action should be taken which considers race as a factor in admissions. To quote Secretary of HEW, Joseph Califano:<sup>27</sup>

"It would be a bizarre society -- a Catch 22 society -- that, judged a person's potential for success by the credentials and experience it has denied to that person by past discrimination...."

Secretary Califano goes on to state that although quotas will not be part of HEW's enforcement, we should rely on the good faith and special efforts of all who join in the final march against discrimination. Unfortunately, this reliance may not be enough. An unfavorable ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court may provide the rationale and excuse for individuals and institutions to retreat from previous efforts in affirmative action in equal employment as well as in equal educational opportunities. Discrimination against minorities still exists, still penetrates every sector of our society, still operates to exclude black Americans and other minorities from their fair share of the rewards and responsibilities of our society. As the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy at Howard University<sup>28</sup> points out there are a number of little known facts about the Bakke Case:

- Bakke had been rejected by 11 other medical schools.
- 15 white students who had higher scores than Bakke and 20 white students who had comparable benchmark scores were also rejected.

- Bakke had been denied admission in 1973 and 1974 and had been turned down as an alternate in both these years.
- There were at least 8 white students who were admitted to Davis Medical School who had lower benchmark scores than Bakke and 36 white students who had lower grade point averages.

Even if Bakke actually lost his chance to enter medical school because a mere 16 places had been set aside for minority entrants -- and the evidence does not support this conclusion -- whatever damage may have been done has to be weighed against the benefits to society of increasing the numbers of minority physicians. But even more important than this is the need to recognize the myth of the merit system. There is no merit system, nor has there ever been. Criteria other than test scores have always been used: money, influence, political connections, geography, athletic ability, musical ability and many other factors have always been used to determine who is admitted and who is rejected for admission to colleges and universities, graduate and professional schools. Qualifications have never been objective and unchanging. Most tests are designed not to determine qualifications, but to screen people out. When compared to the importance of increasing the pool of minority physicians and remedying the effects of past discrimination, the difference of a few points on a test or in a grade point average pales into insignificance. Realism, as well as honesty demand that racial factors as well as other factors of deprivation and disadvantage be considered in efforts to redress the effects of past discrimination.

Perhaps the case was stated best by George Bonham in an editorial in Change Magazine.<sup>29</sup>

"One of the peculiar dilemmas of the Bakke Case is that perfectly rational arguments can be made on either side: for preferment for minorities or for equal and color blind treatment for all. Americans like to believe that large social issues can be resolved on purely rational and procedural grounds by civilized men and women. But rationality alone could never have led this nation to racism or to our continued maintenance of first and second class citizens. Clearly, other factors come into play: call them instinct, prejudice, personal bias, what you will. It is no longer sufficient to follow such patterns of legal evaluation. Resolving issues of human rights and dignity on narrow procedural grounds rather than on grounds of public morality and public practice is often tantamount to not resolving these issues at all. What is at stake here is not only an interpretation of constitutional law, but the resolve of a nation to make more equal the opportunities for all its people, even if that making equal means giving momentary advantages to those heretofore deprived."

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### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the progress which can be cited in a number of areas, black Americans in 1978 can look forward to continued struggle in their efforts to achieve equality of educational opportunity. Despite the increase in years of education completed, in increased attendance in post-secondary education and in graduation from colleges and professional schools, it seems clear that black Americans must continue to "run fast just to stand still." In disproportionate numbers, black Americans attend public schools which are under-financed and enjoy diminishing public support as they become increasingly non-white and poor. They attend schools which are often beset by problems of violence and vandalism and which disgorge dropouts, push-outs and graduates who, too often, lack even the most rudimentary skills necessary for employment, further education or responsible citizenship. Black Americans continue to select colleges, primarily on the basis of where they can afford to attend, enter fields which have historically provided employment opportunities to them, and avoid or are excluded from fields which appear to offer the best prospects for employment and service during the coming decades. Historically black colleges, a national resource, struggle for survival despite their increasing enrollments and stellar history of producing educated black leadership in many fields of endeavor, not excluding leadership in the continuing struggle for full citizenship and equality.

It is becoming increasingly apparent to more and more black Americans that the struggle has entered a new phase; that what once appeared to be receptivity to and support for full equality for black Americans may well have been, at best, a temporary phenomenon and, at worst, an illusion. For more and more black Americans, it is becoming increasingly apparent that they can no longer -- if they ever could -- look to someone else (city, state or federal agencies, liberal organizations, a few powerful leaders) to guarantee equality of educational opportunity.

Black Americans in ever increasing numbers are rediscovering the fact that no piece of legislation, no federal program, no amount of money can instill motivation, commitment, respect for excellence and the desire to achieve and struggle in our children and youth. The need for and the value of education are values black Americans must increasingly assume will be communicated to and developed in our youth primarily through our own efforts. Our prisons, jails, street corners, schools and cities are filled with black youth who possess ability, talent, creativity and potential. What too many of them lack is opportunity, motivation, employment, support and, perhaps most important, hope.

Faced with this stark reality, many black Americans have resolved that if achieving equality of educational opportunity means we must recognize that black Americans must achieve at a higher level than their white counterparts to succeed, our young people must know and confront that reality while we struggle to eliminate that double standard; if the public schools continue to fail to deliver educational

services of sufficient quality to equip black youth with appropriate skills, black Americans must provide supplementary support systems while we struggle to reorganize, redesign and improve the public schools until they become accountable; if the historically black colleges have to struggle for survival, black Americans must find new and expanded methods of supporting them until we can force federal and state governments to provide an equitable share of available monies on a consistent and long-term basis. Most important perhaps, if black Americans are united in their goals but divided on the means whereby those goals are achieved, we must understand that we can have unity, if not uniformity.

We will all progress together or we shall certainly all suffer together.

For black Americans in 1978, the struggle goes on.

# # #

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, "School Enrollment -- Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October, 1976," Series P-20, No. 309 (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, July, 1977) p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, "Population Profile of the United States: 1976," Series P-20, No. 307 (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, April, 1977).

<sup>3</sup>Bureau of the Census, October, 1976, Table 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, "School Enrollment -- Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October, 1975," Series P-20, No. 303 (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, December, 1976) p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Bureau of the Census, October, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>Bureau of the Census, October, 1975, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup>Education Background Papers mimeographed report by the National Urban League, 1977, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>William Lloyd Warren, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, "Who Shall Be Educated?" (New York: Harper and Row, 1944), p. xi.

<sup>11</sup>David Kimp and Mark G. Yudif, "Serrano in the Political Arena?" Yale Review of Law and Social Action, 2, 1971, p. 144.

<sup>12</sup>From Testimony of David Long, Director of School Finance Reform Project of the L.C.C.R.L. to the Subcommittee on Elementary/Secondary and Vocational Education of the House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, September 28, 1977.

<sup>13</sup>Seymour Sacks and John Callahan, "Big City Schools: 1970-1975 -- A Problem of Changing Fiscal Pressures," a mimeographed report, Washington, D. C.: National Conference of State Legislatures, September, 1977.

<sup>14</sup>Testimony from Michael V. Hodge, Director, School Finance Reform Project of the National Urban Coalition to the Subcommittee on Elementary/Secondary and Vocational Education of the House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, September 28, 1977.

<sup>15</sup>Peggy Seigel, "The Politics of School Finance Reform" in Campbell, State Policy Making for the Public Schools (California: McCutcheon, 1976), p. 87.

- <sup>16</sup>Bureau of the Census, October, 1976, p. 2.
- <sup>17</sup>Education Background Papers, p. 4.
- <sup>18</sup>U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Federal Agencies and Black Colleges Fiscal Years 1972 and 1973, (Washington, D.C.: HEW, 1976).
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 3-5.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 8.
- <sup>21</sup>The National Goal of Equal Opportunity and the Historically Black Colleges. Statement submitted to David Matthews, Secretary, HEW, on November 4, 1975, by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education.
- <sup>22</sup>Hearings before the Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, 94th Congress, 1st Session on Oversight and Information Concerning Student Assistance Under the Higher Education Act, Part I, 1975, p. 768.
- <sup>23</sup>Franklin R. Evans, "Applications and Admissions to ABA Accredited Law Law Schools: An Analysis of the National Data for the Class Entering in the Fall of 1976," Princeton, New Jersey: Law School Admission Council, May, 1977, p. 102.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 39. See for example, the Warkov Study (1965) it examined LSAT scores of entering law students for 1961 (Seymour Warkov, "Lawyers in the Making -- the 1961 Entrants to American Law Schools," Chicago, Illinois: National Opinion Research Center, 1963).
- <sup>25</sup>Arnold S. Relman, "Minority Admissions: Beyond Bakke." "New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 297, No. 21 (November 24, 1977), p. 1175.
- <sup>26</sup>George W. Bonham, "Bakke," editorial in Change Magazine, Vol. 9, No. 10 (October, 1977), p. 21.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., Secretary Califano's support for increased minority inclusion was expressed in an interview earlier in the year when he stated, "How am I, as Secretary of HEW, even going to find first-class black scientists, first-class women scientists, if these people don't have the chance to get into the best places (schools) in the country?" (New York Times, March 18, 1977, interview.
- <sup>28</sup>Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, The Bakke Case Primer, Washington, D. C.: Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, Howard University.
- <sup>29</sup>Bonham, Change Magazine, p. 20.



FIGURE 1

Table 3  
Law School - Black Enrollment, by Year, 1969-1970 through 1976-1977

|          | <u>1st Year</u> | <u>2nd Year</u> | <u>3rd Year</u> | <u>4th Year</u> | <u>Group not<br/>Stated</u> | <u>Total Black<br/>Enrollment</u> | <u>%Black<br/>Enrollment</u> | <u>Grand<br/>Total</u> |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1969-70  | 1,115           | 574             | 395             | 44              | --                          | 2,128                             | 2.95                         | 72,032                 |
| 1970-71* |                 |                 |                 |                 |                             |                                   |                              |                        |
| 1971-72  | 1,716           | 1,147           | 761             | 55              | 65                          | 3,744                             | 3.90                         | 95,943                 |
| 1972-73  | 1,907           | 1,324           | 1,106           | 74              | 12                          | 4,423                             | 4.20                         | 105,245                |
| 1973-74  | 1,943           | 1,443           | 1,207           | 101             | 123                         | 4,817                             | 4.20                         | 114,800                |
| 1974-75  | 1,910           | 1,587           | 1,329           | 145             | 24                          | 4,995                             | 4.29                         | 116,517                |
| 1975-76  | 2,045           | 1,511           | 1,452           | 119             | 0                           | 5,127                             | 4.18                         | 122,542                |
| 1976-77  | 2,128           | 1,654           | 1,488           | 233             | 0                           | 5,503                             | 4.40                         | 125,010                |

\*Figures not available.

Source: Law Schools and Bar Admission Requirements: A review of legal education in the United States - Fall, 1976:  
 American Bar Association, 1977.

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FIGURE 2

Table 2 - Total U.S. Black Enrollment

| YEAR    | NUMBER<br>BLACK | PERCENTAGE<br>BLACK | TOTAL % U.S.<br>MINORITIES* | TOTAL** |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1972-73 | 2,582           | 5.4                 | 8.3                         | 47,366  |
| 1973-74 | 3,049           | 6.0                 | 9.5                         | 50,751  |
| 1974-75 | 3,355           | 6.3                 | 10.4                        | 53,554  |
| 1975-76 | 3,456           | 6.2                 | 10.6                        | 55,818  |
| 1976-77 | 3,517           | 6.1                 | 10.9                        | 57,765  |

Source: Data gram "U.S. Medical Students Enrollments 1972-73 through 1976-77",  
p. 166

\*Includes: Blacks, American Indians, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Orientals  
Cubans and others.

\*\*Total U.S. Medical School Enrollment

: : :

FIGURE 3

Medical Schools

Table 1 - Black Enrollment, First Year 1972-77

| YEAR    | NUMBER<br>BLACK | PERCENT<br>BLACK | TOTAL % U.S.<br>MINORITIES* | TOTAL** |
|---------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1972-73 | 957             | 7.0              | 10.5                        | 13,677  |
| 1973-74 | 1,027           | 7.2              | 11.5                        | 14,159  |
| 1974-75 | 1,106           | 7.5              | 12.5                        | 14,763  |
| 1975-76 | 1,036           | 6.8              | 11.7                        | 15,295  |
| 1976-77 | 1,040           | 6.7              | 12.1                        | 15,613  |

Source: Data gram-"U.S. Medical Student Enrollments 1972-73 through 1976-77",  
p. 165.

\*Includes: Blacks, American Indians, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Orientals  
Cuban Americans and others.

\*\*All first-year medical students:

1972-73 - 112 schools  
1973-76 - 114 schools  
1976-77 - 116 schools

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FIGURE 4

Blacks serving medical residency by speciality (10 lowest categories) as of September 1973

| <u>Specialty</u>      | <u>Total Graduates U.S., Canada, and Foreign</u> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Child Psychiatry      | 4                                                |
| Dermatology           | 12                                               |
| Diagnostic radiology  | 9                                                |
| Nuclear medicine      | 2                                                |
| Pediatric allergy     | 2                                                |
| Otolaryngology        | 14                                               |
| Pediatric cardiology  | 6                                                |
| Plastic surgery       | 3                                                |
| Therapeutic radiology | 3                                                |
| Thoracic surgery      | 8                                                |

The highest specialities for blacks are: general surgery, obstetrics-gynecology and internal medicine respectively.

- (There is a need for blacks to diversify) (not from source)

Source: Journal of the American Medical Association, Supplement Vol. 231 (January, 1975)

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FIGURE 5

U.S. Dental Schools

1. Total black

|         |   |            |
|---------|---|------------|
| 1972-73 | - | 765 (4.2%) |
| 1974-75 | - | 945 (4.7%) |

Source: American Dental Association Annual Report 1972-73 and Report for 1974-75, Dental Education Supplement, "Minority Student Enrollment and Opportunities in U.S. Dental Schools."

2. Dental Schools - Black Graduates

| <u>MEHARRY</u> | <u>Graduates</u> | <u>% of total</u> |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1972-73        | 26               | 35.1              |
| 1974-75        | 27               | 17.1              |

| <u>HOWARD</u> | <u>Graduates</u> | <u>% of total</u> |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1972-73       | 33               | 44.6              |
| 1974-75       | 48               | 31.2              |

Source: American Dental Association, Ibid.

3. In 1974 -- 458 black dental students from a total of 550 were enrolled at Meharry or Howard constituting a 48.5% enrollment at the 2 black colleges.
4. 1974 -- out of 154 black graduates, 75 (48.7%) were graduated from Meharry and Howard.

: : :



FIGURE 6

Pharmacy - (field relies upon the "hard" sciences -- blacks must stop evading this area).

1972-73 -- of the 659 black students enrolled, 372 were enrolled in historically black colleges (Howard, Texas Southern, Xavier Universities, and Florida A&M)

3.6% black enrollment in pharmacy.

Source: American Association of College Pharmacy,  
"Report on Enrollment in Schools and Colleges of  
Pharmacy, 1972-73, 1974."

: : :

FIGURE 7

Table 5

ENGINEERING DEGREES GRANTED TO BLACKS

|           | <u>1968-69</u> | <u>1969-70</u> | <u>1970-71</u> | <u>1971-72</u> | <u>1972-73</u> | <u>1973-74</u> |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Bachelor  | .79%           | .88%           | .94%           | 1.31%          | 1.51%          | 1.83%          |
| Master's  | .11%           | .32%           | .29%           | .45%           | .61%           | .99%           |
| Doctorate | .06%           | .03%           | .22%           | .34%           | .35%           | .36%           |

Source: Brown, Frank and Madelon D. Stent. "Minorities in U.S. Institutions of Higher Education" (New York: Praeger, 1977) p.77.

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FIGURE 8

Black, B.A.'s by Curriculum, 1974 (ten lowest categories)

| <u>Curriculum</u>       | <u>Number Black</u> | <u>Total Number of Degrees</u> | <u>% Blacks</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Aerospace            | 13                  | 1,041                          | 1.2             |
| 2. Biomedical           | 7                   | 174                            | 4.0             |
| 3. Computer             | 10                  | 727                            | 1.4             |
| 4. Engineering Sciences | 14                  | 950                            | 1.5             |
| 5. Environmental        | 1                   | 129                            | 0.8             |
| 6. Geological           | 1                   | 200                            | 0.5             |
| 7. Marine/Naval         | 2                   | 568                            | 0.4             |
| 8. Materials/Metallurgy | 1                   | 580                            | 0.2             |
| 9. Nuclear              | 1                   | 339                            | 0.3             |
| 10. Petroleum           | 2                   | 299                            | 0.7             |

Fields with no Black represented as of 1974: agriculture, ceramic, mining, and systems

Source: Engineering manpower Commission, Engineers Joint Council, Engineering and Technology Degrees 1974, January, 1975. "

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FIGURE 9

Table 4

Selected Characteristics of Scientists and Engineers, by Field and Race, U.S. 1974

| <u>RACE</u> | <u>Computer<br/>Specialists</u> |       | <u>Engineers</u> |       | <u>Environmental<br/>Scientists</u> |       | <u>Life<br/>Sciences</u> |       |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| WHITE       | 53,248                          | 96.5% | 664,526          | 96.6% | 28,919                              | 98.1% | 72,076                   | 95.5% |
| BLACK       | 844                             | 1.5%  | 4,491            | 0.7%  | 47                                  | 0.2%  | 1,179                    | 1.6%  |

Source: Digest of Educational Statistics 1976 edition, Washington, D.C.; Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1977, p. 188.

|       | <u>Mathematical<br/>Specialists</u> |       | <u>Physical<br/>Scientists</u> |       | <u>Psychologists</u> |       | <u>Social<br/>Scientists</u> |       |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| WHITE | 25,923                              | 93.1% | 113,845                        | 94.1% | 34,065               | 97.6% | 46,221                       | 96.4% |
| BLACK | 1,031                               | 3.7%  | 2,205                          | 1.8%  | 636                  | 1.8%  | 674                          | 1.4%  |

Source: Digest of Educational Statistics 1976 edition, Washington, D. C.; Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1977, p. 188.

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HOUSING

by

Dr. Robert C. Weaver

The Urban Setting

Increasingly the urban disadvantaged in the United States are concentrated in the cities. This occurred at a time when the structure and role of cities were changing, and many of them faced economic decline and fiscal bind in the environment of rapid suburbanization. In that setting, the contemporary poor and near poor were confronted with new and in many ways unique situations. The problem of the cities and their less affluent residents are interrelated, and they feed upon each other.

Because in recent decades the exodus from the central city to the suburbs peaked at the same time that a large number of the newcomers to the large metropolitan areas were readily identifiable minorities, there has been much distortion of what had been involved. Some have confused coincidence with causation. To them desertion of the central cities by middle and upper-income whites was purely and simply a means of escape from blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Chicanos.

Suburbanization through migration has been almost a universal phenomenon in the United States for some time. Many cities with extremely small nonwhite populations were involved. Binghamton, New York; Brockton, Massachusetts; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Duluth, Minnesota; and Superior, Wisconsin, are just a few examples. Canada, without a significant color minority, has had a similar urban development. Affluent city residents and more recently the less affluent,



in the absence of race as an issue, would still have opted for suburban living and would have been busily engaged in erecting zoning barriers and opposing subsidized housing to keep out those of low income, as they do in the suburbs of cities with relatively few minority residents. Thus color alone cannot account for the great migration to this nation's suburbs.

The earlier movement of higher-income whites from other whites who were poor was motivated by a desire of the more affluent to place distance between themselves and those they considered destructive to their status, image, and property rights, as well as a threat to their safety. Once they and middle-income migrants located in suburbia, they developed communities responsive to upper and middle-class values. Escape from the poor and disadvantaged was high on the list, and improved quality of public facilities, especially the schools, was a major goal. Equally important was the American love affair with home ownership. It called for a freestanding, single-family house with, preferably at least, an acre of land.

The less affluent, once they were able, sought to emulate the early suburbanites, while often motivated by the prospect of greater employment opportunities as well. What was originally a class phenomenon became a racial issue when blacks were a larger sector of the cities' population. This, of course, complicated the issue, since the myopia induced by accentuating race not only distorts reality, but occasions acceptance of current racial spatial residential distribution as inevitable and immutable.

The American city had traditionally provided a way station for the waves of immigrants who came from abroad, and by and large it treated them well. Though they were not strangers to hardship, they learned the language and new

skills and many of them went up the long tenement trail to relative affluence and acceptance into American society. But in recent decades this historic role of the city had deteriorated badly. Its humanizing influence has faltered; the urban poor are increasingly insulated from the larger society and constitute a disproportionate segment of the hard core unemployed. Millions of black and other minority group families are trapped in racial ghettos; and once trapped, they are hard put to break away.

There is no one reason for this. Inferior housing and inferior education go hand in hand, and together they foster and reinforce inferior employment opportunities and inferior incomes. They are parts of a cycle of intertwined causes and effects, strengthening each other like the strands of a rope which binds and chokes millions of American families. Opportunity and the traditional urban choices have not been generally available to these recent newcomers. Nor does the economy any longer need a labor reserve of unskilled workers at the same time that the low wages such workers are offered become more onerous in a generally affluent society, and such employment may endanger the fringe benefits they and their families enjoy since more minimum wage jobs do not provide all the fringe benefits available through public assistance. As contrasted to the depression, we now have class unemployment rather than mass unemployment. With prosperity all around them and a television set in the tenement room, these facts are not lost on those trapped in the racial ghetto. This is neither a black problem nor a city problem; it is a national problem. The United States faces today, as it has long faced, a choice between directing the understanding, resources, and commitment necessary to deal effectively with this issue or risk the social costs of harboring a sizeable alienated element without a vested interest in the society.<sup>1</sup>

Economic Factors in Housing for Blacks

Three elements have long conditioned the housing status of urban blacks. The first two are market forces which affect all sectors in the population. Unless there is an adequate supply of shelter within the price ranges of those involved, they cannot acquire it as purchasers or renters. The ability to secure what is available depends upon the degree that the need for housing is translated into an effective demand. For blacks there has been and remains a peculiar element -- access to shelter that they can afford.

Although, even in periods of high residential construction, the volume of new housing is only a small increment in the total supply, it has strategic significance for blacks. It is crucial to opening the suburbs to them, expands their choices, raises the overall quality of housing, and facilitates redevelopment of blighted areas in the core city. Effective demand for housing involves a steady and adequate income, preferable through employment or in combination with subsidy programs. It is translated into acquisition of decent housing for blacks only to the extent that market forces and/or effective open housing legislation operate to provide access to housing for those who have the inclination and resources to acquire it.

In recent years, another consideration has taken on new significance. It is the quality of the neighborhood, involving physical characteristics, public facilities and services, safety, and general attractiveness. Its most extreme and depleting expression is property and neighborhood abandonment. Here, too, economic forces are operative since a major cause of abandonment is inability of real estate to generate sufficient cash flow to sustain maintenance, upkeep, taxes, and payment of fixed costs on capital investment.

These deficiencies are accentuated in periods of sustained inflation. They also call for a new emphasis upon tying community development to housing production and maintenance and upon sustaining and increasing the incomes of actual or potential purchasers and renters.

Blacks and other minorities inherited communities with a steadily deteriorating tax base and constantly declining job opportunities. The concentration of the poor, the aged, and the disadvantaged in cities required increased public expenditures for services at a time when many cities' tax revenue declined precipitously. This led to advocacy of budget cuts and reduction in public employment and social services to be compensated for by expansion of jobs in private enterprise. If, and the "if" is important, an increase in private enterprise jobs would be assuredly translated into significantly more employment for the poor, the proposal would have greater appeal to the less advantaged. Unfortunately, this is not assured, since most of the good jobs in the city call for skills the disadvantaged do not possess.

Blacks and other urban poor see themselves being pressured to give up some of their current social and economic benefits for future more rewarding and fulfilling employment. But they are far from convinced. They do not see evidences that employment will grow in the immediate future; nor if it did, they would benefit significantly. Then, too, proponents of cutbacks in social services are also advocates of stressing control of inflation at the cost of continuing unemployment which spells despair for the disadvantaged. The proponents of this strategy are, despite recent modifications in the situation, still the symbol of blacks' and other minorities' traditional exclusion from private employment. The poor are suspicious of Greeks bearing gifts.



Black ghetto youth suffer from unconscionable high rates of unemployment — no less than 40 percent and possibly as high as 50 percent. This is one of the most turbulent and complex problems of the nation. Even reasonably high employment will not bring many job opportunities to the majority of those who are without skills. Full employment, as it is currently conceived at a rate of four percent would do little, in and of itself, to relieve the structural unemployment affecting primarily the inexperienced and unskilled, a large proportion of whom are black. Yet a high level of employment is a sine qua non for establishing an economic and political climate in which the hard core unemployed can be trained and hired. Unless there is such training, the inexperienced and unskilled will remain largely idle, even if and when the economy heats up to a degree which will not generate double-digit inflation. Those long conditioned by structural unemployment will not be motivated to seek training if they fail to see a job at the end of the process. Therefore, public intervention to change the situation is an indispensable ingredient. This intervention would involve tying federal incentives for economic expansion to requirements for training and employing the inexperienced and unskilled with special emphasis upon black youth. While the private sector must be stressed, it needs to be supplemented by public employment, which can maintain more immediate relief to the victims of structural unemployment and take up the slack in private jobs.

Insofar as these efforts are concentrated in the central cities, they imply that the trend toward growth of job opportunities in suburbia can and will be reversed. For the present and short-term future, there is every reason to expect continuing growth of employment opportunities beyond the borders of central cities, especially in blue-collar jobs. Thus as incentives are



targeted upon expanding economic activities and employment in the cities, it is crucial that blacks become a larger sector of the labor force in localities which provide growing employment activities. This calls for effective federal programs and actions to provide moderate-income housing in suburbia and opening it to blacks.

Recently, the earlier accepted concept that suburbanization of employment opportunities has been a deterrent to reduction of poverty and inequality in our cities has been challenged. The revisionists assert that suburbs have had an adequate supply of labor to keep pace with the expansion of job opportunities, and much is made of the paucity of jobs for less skilled workers in suburbia and elsewhere in the United States. <sup>2</sup>

There is some validity in this position, especially the emphasis upon the shift away from utilization of the untrained. But this is not the real issue. There are now many blacks and other identifiable minority workers who would be afforded significantly greater employment opportunities had they access to housing more accessible to available jobs. And they are not primarily the inexperienced and the unskilled. Effective training programs would augment the numbers available for work, both in the city and the suburbs. An expanding economy would significantly increase the volume of such job opportunities. But as long as blacks are denied access to shelter in localities where new jobs are concentrated, their chances of securing work will be adversely affected.

More is involved. Over the long-run, both from the point of view of national well-being and survival of minorities, "incentives to disperse minority populations across the entire country" is a federal policy alternative. "Basically this would mean opening up real housing opportunities for minorities in suburban areas." <sup>3</sup>

In 1961, the Kennedy Administration proposed and the Congress enacted the first national program for moderate-income housing. In 1966, the Model Cities program of the Johnson Administration was enacted. This was followed by the 1968 Housing and Community Development Act. A final major component in the Johnson years was the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which, in Title VIII, extended the prohibitions of discrimination in the sale or rental of all tract and a large proportion of single-family, individually owned units, covering about 80 percent of the housing supply. It also called for affirmative action to implement its provisions.

The 1968 Housing and Community Development Act broke new ground, estimating the housing needs and setting goals to meet them (particularly for lower-income households) over the following decade. It provided machinery, primarily sections 235 and 236, for achieving the goals, and required an annual progress report. While performance was somewhat short of the goals, it was spectacular by historical standards.<sup>4</sup> A combination of inept administration, politicizing of appointments in HUD, the unanticipated impact of inflation, and over-development in many declining core areas of cities led to serious problems in the section 236 rental and cooperative 1968 subsidized housing program. Inept, corrupt and unsophisticated administration in its companion section 235 home ownership program for low and moderate-income households, combined with the Nixon Administration's failure to initiate the counseling program authorized in the 1968 Act, to occasion scandals and abuses. Yet the two programs provided an unprecedented volume of lower-income housing

production, of which a fifth was for blacks. In three regions the percentage of blacks moving from the central cities to the suburbs via sections 235 and 236 was almost three times the national rate between 1965 and 1970.<sup>5</sup>

The Model Cities program demonstrated that federal community development grants could be targeted to the disadvantaged. And it and associated programs developed a workable approach to meaningful indigenous citizen participation based upon performance standards.

In January 1973, the Nixon Administration placed a moratorium on housing subsidies and suspended Model Cities and other community development programs for a year. The Congress, as well as minorities and liberals were disturbed, for they realized that the gains under Model Cities and the 1968 Housing and Community Development Act were terminated. Involved were the participation for the first time of private developers in providing housing for the less advantaged, housing subsidies to augment lower-income housing in central cities, and instruments which had a real potential for accelerating the entrance of blacks into the suburbs.

This setback for blacks was preceded and followed by a series of Congressional proposals. While none was enacted into law, several in the House of Representatives marked an advance in federal housing and urban development policy. For the first time it was proposed to use community development grants as leverage and an inducement for securing lower-income housing outside the central city. In developing proposals for such housing, localities were instructed to provide housing for those reasonably expected to reside in the community.

In 1974, the first omnibus housing and community development act in six years was passed. The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 which emerged was a compromise among the Administration, the Senate, and the House. Many of the latter's early proposals were retained, while the Nixon Administration's proposed Better Communities Act, which would have made special revenue sharing grants with practically no strings attached, was repudiated by the Congress. The block grant which survived had minimal requirements for prior federal approval, but also provided for some significant performance criteria which reflected national priorities.

Earlier the Nixon Administration had proposed housing allowances to replace sections 235 and 236. When it realized their potential costs, allowances were relegated to an experimental effort. A new subsidy rental program, section 8, was advanced by the Administration and enacted by the Congress. Consistent with earlier proposals of the House of Representatives, Community Development Block Grants were tied in with housing for the less affluent. Of course, several years of lower-income housing production was lost as the new program floundered.

The goals of the 1974 Act included maximum feasible priorities to activities benefiting low or moderate-income families, promotion of greater choices of housing opportunities, and avoidance of undue concentration of subsidized families in areas containing a high proportion of low-income persons. These goals and objectives could have blazed a new trail in urban and housing problem solving. The 1974 statute was flawed by the basic inconsistency between the goals of more rational land use and reduction of the geographic isolation of income groups on the one hand, and the structuring of the Housing Assistance Plan (which was the instrument for



allocation of subsidized housing) on a citywide rather than an areawide scale on the other. It suffered from inevitable delay in lower-income housing production inherent in depending upon a new program of housing subsidies and utilization of questionable measurement of poverty in the allocation formula for community development grants.

During the latter part of the Nixon Administration and during most of the Ford Administration, the open occupancy requirements of the 1968 Civil Rights Act were observed in the breach. Production of lower-income housing lagged, and hardly any pressure was placed upon suburbs enjoying Community Development Block Grants to provide housing for lower-income families expected to reside within their borders. Nor was there compliance with the law in regard to low or moderate-income people's receiving maximum benefits in the community development program.

In addition, the Nixon and Ford Administrations nurtured an attitude of helplessness and hopelessness concerning federal programs to deal with social and urban problems. They achieved an alarming degree of initial success. While many Americans now recognize such an approach as a virtual cop-out, it is not dead and has great appeal to a generally affluent society where it is financially attractive and assuages the consciences of those who, without it, might be troubled by deprivation amidst widespread well-being. This legacy, however, is so appealing, so escapist, and so opportunistic that there is always the danger of its rising again as national policy.



Lessons from the 1960's and 1970's

The last two decades have demonstrated the limitations of housing as the solution of the problems of the disadvantaged. Better shelter alone can make no more than a limited contribution toward offsetting the alienation of those who are outside the mainstream of America's affluent society. When housing is almost exclusively a part of inner-city strategy, it is but a partial and inadequate approach.

Another lesson is that amelioration of deprivation is a costly undertaking. Yet in light of the long acceptance of large outlays of public funds to benefit mostly affluent home buyers, it is probably the destination rather than the magnitude of the expenditures that disturbs many Americans when they contemplate housing subsidies for the less affluent.

At the operational level, the limitations and problems of widespread and indiscriminate provision of home ownership for the poor have become apparent. The earlier enthusiasm for such an approach was defective from the start, since the concept was an effort to graft a middle-class institution upon a segment of the population which was and is denied middle-class opportunities, security, and economic status. When pursued selectively, carefully administered so as to protect relatively unsophisticated, first-time purchasers, and complemented by counseling, it has a limited but significant role. The immediate concern of minorities is rendering operative the open occupancy requirements for free access to shelter for those who are economically able to acquire housing throughout the urban complex. For those who have effective demand for housing, there are significant economic benefits in home ownership. The longer-run issue is reducing the concentration of the poor in the central cities, a point which will be developed later in this paper.

Urban homesteading suffers from limitations similar to those inherent in indiscriminate encouragement of home ownership by the poor. It, too, must be pursued selectively. Where there is widespread abandonment or deteriorated housing and urban blight, homesteading is a dubious tool. It is desirable only when coordinated with neighborhood upgrading or applied in areas where the process of abandonment or deterioration is in its early stages. Homesteading is most likely to succeed when the property or properties involved are located in viable neighborhoods or in areas which are being made viable. Just as many unwary purchasers, lulled into a false sense of security by the incidence of FHA insurance, were exploited and victimized by a poorly administered low-income housing sales program, so unknowledgeable urban homesteaders may be seduced by over-enthusiastic local officials into commitments on properties that cannot become viable residences. Neither indiscriminate home ownership for the poor nor urban homesteading, as attractive as they are in middle-class oriented society, will significantly upgrade the quality of housing for the mass of urban blacks.

There is always the danger in housing and urban development of deluding oneself that a slight ripple in the sea of problems is a tidal wave of solution. This occurred in urban renewal when many of its proponents saw the trickle of a return of the more affluent to the central cities as a reversal of the trend to suburban living. Thus they grossly exaggerated the demand for redeveloped luxury housing in the city. Today the return of those who have been called "urban pioneers" to cities such as Atlanta, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington has been siezed upon by some as an event of

signal importance. Its significance to date is not the return of a flood of middle-class families from suburbia, but that some middle-class families and individuals are evidencing an interest in returning to the cities. Even its limited volume has created serious problems for low-income and minority households, suggesting that, as we learned in urban renewal, economic and ethnic displacement is politically volatile. Sensitive relocation, partial continued residence, and access to suburbia for present residents are conditions antecedent to humane changes in the mix of user groups.

#### Recent Developments

The 1977 Housing and Community Development Act authorizes new Urban Development Action Grants to severely distressed cities and urban counties. The grants are designed to help alleviate physical and economic deterioration through reclamation of neighborhoods having excessive housing abandonment or deterioration, and through community revitalization in areas of population outmigration or stagnant or declining tax bases. They are designed, in part, to attract and leverage private investment into such localities. Thus they extend the scope of the 1974 Act's Community Development Block Grants. A second item, among other provisions of the statute, is its requirement for the release of section 236 operating subsidies to compensate for increases of costs in real estate taxes and utility costs. They had been authorized in the 1974 Act but were not activated by the Ford Administration. A third basic element in the 1977 Act permits continuation for a year of subsidy payments covering debt service costs in all section 8 dwelling units which are unoccupied beyond 60 days. Previously this had not applied to structures fully FHA insured.

While not providing the degree of attractiveness to investors offered by the section 236 program, this change in the law improved the viability of section 8.

On the administrative front, HUD has proposed regulations stipulating that some 75 percent of block grants go to low and moderate-income neighborhoods. The 1974 Act has referred to low or moderate-income families and failed to define what was meant by its prescribed "maximum feasible priority" to activities benefiting low or moderate-income households. The proposed regulations and the 1977 Act also provide for more meaningful citizen participation than had typified the community development activities provided for by the 1974 Act.

The proposed regulations, despite some tightening are deficient in their failure to go far enough in strengthening freedom of choice for lower-income persons, especially minorities, as regards their access to housing throughout metropolitan areas. The minimum goal set forth for localities is one that would meet the housing need in 20 years. Some, as the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, consider such a goal worse than none at all. The situation appears to reflect a continuing reluctance on the part of the Carter Administration to support and stimulate specific requirements for affirmative action to permit spatial deconcentration of lower-income families. The need for positive federal action is documented by a HUD-funded survey of the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing. The findings of this nationwide audit revealed that none of the 40 metropolitan areas included was without evidences of racial discrimination, despite the

fact that a significant number of the real estate brokers and agents appeared to treat black and white homeseekers with equal courtesy and fairness.<sup>6</sup>

There is no real dichotomy between the Administration's reported policy of giving a tilt of existing federal urban programs in favor of distressed cities and needy people on the one hand, and equally vigorously stressing reduction of the concentration of the disadvantaged in the core areas of the metropolitan complex on the other. Indeed, the two policies complement each other in strengthening the economic base of cities and upgrading the status of the deprived if combined with programs for economic expansion, effective job training, welfare reform, and improved public education. As Professor Lester C. Thurow of MIT has aptly observed:

"The heart of the central city economic problem is a long-run decline accelerated by a concentration of low income minority groups...And until we solve this (latter) problem of low minority incomes, we are going to have a continually festering urban crisis." <sup>7</sup>

There is, in addition to the economic justification for a combined inner-city and suburban approach, ample statutory authorization. The present proposals of HUD to target Community Development Block Grant funds to low and moderate-income areas is delineated in the 1974 and 1977 Housing Acts. Were this combined with an effective Housing Assistance Plan which provided shelter for lower-income groups expected to reside in localities enjoying CDBG funding -- also provided for in the Acts -- there would be a beginning of a suburban strategy. It would, of course, require effective enforcement of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Law of 1968, as well as utilization of the Secretary's authority to become the houser of last resort in the section 8 program. This authority, too, is contained in the 1974 Act.



With the announcement of the Urban and Regional Policy Group under the chairmanship of Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris of HUD, there were expressions of high hope. Not only did many see a new recognition of concern for cities--and of necessity for the disadvantaged and blacks--but they were encouraged to believe that new approaches to deal with them, and make operative the promises of the 1974 Act, the refinements of the 1977 Act, and the department's administrative reforms of that year were involved. While many, as the present writer, questioned the adequacy of what had been said to be proposed, it seemed to be a significant break with the benign neglect of cities, the poor, and urban blacks during the Nixon-Ford years.

As this is being written, hard political realities have dampened expectations.<sup>8</sup> Only the naive were surprised when the proposed tilting of urban assistance to the less advantaged generated strong opposition from more affluent localities and residents. Proposal of affirmative open occupancy in housing is only slightly less of an anathema to suburbia than the suggestion that poor minority people be geographically more widely dispersed in the urban complex. Without strong and sustained support from the White House, no department or even a coalition of several departments and agencies can be effective in securing affirmative action and equal opportunity.

The greatest threat to an effective federal urban and housing program--and to blacks in particular--is the Carter Administration's essential fiscal conservatism. Thus expanded aid to the cities and the disadvantaged seems destined to occasion a collision between the rate of expenditure involved and the President's commitment to a balanced budget by fiscal 1981.<sup>9</sup> This also finds expression in advocacy of control of inflation even at the cost of unconscionable and socially dangerously high rates of unemployment.

The dangers of high rates of inflation cannot be ignored, but the impact of expanded employment for jobless youth would do little to drive up wages and prices. On the other hand, the economic and social costs of high unemployment especially when its incidence is disproportionately concentrated in the ghetto and among the youth residing there are all too obvious.

One example illustrates the dangers to urban development and housing programs inherent in the Administration's budget policy. As noted above, HUD proposed a program for subsidized new housing, modeled after the section 236 program of 1968. The latter proved to have a great potential for opening the suburbs to lower-income minority families. Current reports indicate that funding of the proposal has been drastically reduced. This is one of many possible casualties of a hold-the-line budget the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is expected to champion. If OMB prevails, not only will a crucial element in a suburban strategy be undermined, but expansion in housing construction, a basic element in economic growth, will be reduced.

Equally alarming are the persistent rumors that OMB proposes a general reduction in HUD's budget. Among the other proposed HUD programs adversely affected are a mortgage interest subsidy plan to increase residential lending activity in city areas, and a new section 8 set-aside proposal for rehabilitating marginally substandard, inner-city dwellings. OMB is also said to be opposed to HUD's plan to initiate new flexible operating subsidies for financially troubled FHA-insured lower-income projects which would assure federal subsidies covering the difference between HUD-approved rents and 25 percent of tenants' incomes.

These and associated possible budget actions could mean that HUD may build fewer subsidized housing units in fiscal 1979 than it did under the current Ford-Carter budget;<sup>10</sup> and that many occupants of existing subsidized units will pay a disproportionately high percentage of their incomes for rent. Budgetary considerations also appeared to have precluded either expansion of existing or initiation of new programs for upgrading city public schools.<sup>11</sup> Aside from the cultural and educational implications, such action would have serious economic consequences. It would perpetuate a real urban mismatch between the remaining good jobs in the city and the educational qualifications of many of those still residing within its boundaries.

Should the President support OMB in its position, national policy would affirm the falacious position that the crisis of the cities and the problems of the urban poor can be met without significant increases in federal expenditures. No segment of the population would suffer more from such a policy than the less affluent urban blacks who are concentrated in the central cities. Nor would it and the deemphasis upon affirmative action in housing and employment come to grips with the necessity to deconcentrate lower-income Americans in the urban complexes of the nation.

NOTES

1. This, and the previous paragraph, first appeared in R. C. Weaver, "Tomorrow's City," Samuel Sandmel (ed.), Tomorrow's American (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 116-17.
2. For an excellent summary of recent literature on this subject, see William G. Grigsby, Sammis B. White, Daniel U. Levine, Regina M. Kelley, Marshal Reines Perleman, and George L. Claflin, Jr., Re-thinking Housing and Community Development Policy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1977), Chapter 5.
3. Lester C. Thurow, "New York, A Declining Activity," New York Affairs, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Summer/Fall, 1977), p. 21.
4. Edward R. Fried, Alice M. Rivlin, Charles L. Schultze, Nancy H. Teeters, and Associates, Setting National Priorities: the 1974 Budget (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1973), pp. 135-40.
5. HUD table, "US Housing Starts, 1961-70, by Categories, December 29, 1971" and HUD table as of February 8, 1972; Housing in the Seventies, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Housing, Committee on Banking and Currency, House of Representatives, 93rd Cong., 1st sess., 1973, Part III, table 2, chapter 4, pp. 2091 and 2113.
6. "Nation-Wide Audit Completed: HUD to Release Results," Trends (Washington: National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, Vol. 21, No. 3, Fall issue, 1977), p. 1.
7. Thurow, op. cit., p. 22.
8. For an interesting analysis of some of the issues involved, see James C. Hyatt, "The Administration's Urban Tilt," Wall Street Journal, December 5, 1977, p. 24; and Roger Wilkins, "Carter Policy on Aid to Poor: Praise, Doubt from Experts," New York Times, December 10, 1977, p. 10.
9. Kenneth R. Harney, "Harris Pressed in HUD-OMB Budget Dispute," Washington Post, December 3, 1977, p. D1; and Edward Walsh, "Carter Aides Try to Untangle Urban Policy," ibid., December 14, 1977.
10. Dennis Farney, "Carter Is Completing Fiscal 1979 Budget That's Adding Up to Political Headache," Wall Street Journal, December 12, 1977, p. 2.
11. Wilkins, "A Blank Spot For Education in Urban Plan," New York Times, December 18, 1977, p. A21.

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SOCIAL WELFARE

by

Dr. James R. Dumpson

This presentation on social welfare is made within a number of frames of reference intended to serve as the backdrop against which it is possible to make an objective assessment of the extent to which social welfare is meeting its stated goals insofar as blacks are concerned.

On one level of perception, social welfare involves those activities designed to enhance the quality of life and opportunities for maximum self-development for all persons. On yet another level, social welfare becomes an essential instrument in economic and social development.

And finally, social welfare is perceived as "every action, governmental or voluntary which contributes to building up the structure, both infrastructure and superstructure, of social policies and programs which alone can assure the maintenance and improvement of family and community levels of living, and lead to social progress."<sup>1</sup> However else prescribed, there is general agreement that the chief target populations of social welfare policies and activities are those defined as poor, near-poor, or in danger of becoming financially and socially dependent.

The basic mission of social welfare, then, is to provide a broad array of these personal services to individuals, families, and groups required for an acceptable level of living in our industrialized, highly technological society.



Clearly blacks, as well as other ethnic minority groups of color, by any scale of economic and social need assessment, become a chief target population group for social welfare. Clearly, the interdependence of social and economic development, so essential in national social development, pertains with undeniable importance to individuals and families.

There can be no economic revitalization of urban America without the full implementation of the nation's articulation of commitment to social development of all its people. National social development requires the availability to people of those social and economic supports that our society has sanctioned the social welfare structure to provide. The denial of a full measure of these supports to blacks is not only immoral but a threat to national social development.

This writer holds two other positions that have immediate relevance to the fulfillment of the mission of social welfare as an instrument for the sound economic and social development of individuals and families, and for the sound social and economic development of the nation.

The first is that government, at the federal level, has the ultimate responsibility for assuring the availability of those service and support systems essential for the well-being of all its people. Recourse to the federal government as having primary responsibility for assuring the availability of those services and support systems, necessary for even a minimum level of well-being, collides with the position of those who believe that the government that is closest, geographically, to the people is more likely to be more responsive to the needs of its people. For blacks in the United States, however, it is posited here that only an affirmative federal government

has provided and can continue to provide the opportunities for individual and collective self-realization of black Americans.

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. states it well: "Without the national government, for example, black Americans would still be fifth-class citizens; actually without the national government, most blacks would still be slaves. It is the national government that has protected the Bill of Rights against local vigilantism. It is the national government that has protected natural resources against local greed. It is the national government that has civilized our industry, that has secured the right of labor organization, that has defended the livelihood of the farmer. Only the national government can relieve such problems as racial justice, unemployment, inflation, urban decay, environmental protection, and the nation's need for health care, education and welfare." <sup>2</sup>

The second position that has immediate relevance to the fulfillment of the mission of social welfare as an instrument of national social development and for meeting individual and family needs comes from the field of social ecology. As any imbalance in one of nature's systems is reflected throughout the total ecology, in the manner of falling dominoes, so does the failure of any one of our societal systems affect the balance of our entire social ecology. Those concerned with social policy development and program implementation for redressing the traditional neglect of the social and economic needs of blacks, must therefore take into account any imbalance in the full interlocking social, economic and political systems as these systems impact on blacks. This is clearly evident in the imbalances that exist among the employment and training system, the educational system,

the health services delivery system, and the housing system each of which has an adverse "domino effect" on the functioning of any or all of the other systems.

The social welfare system, in order to carry out its mission to the poor, the near-poor, and those in danger of becoming economically and socially dependent, a disproportionate number of whom are blacks, must interlock with well-functioning housing, employment, educational, and health care systems.

The federal government, through a comprehensive, rational, integrated and humane national policy on the family and on the protection and strengthening of the nation's human resources, must assume primary responsibility for an effective, well functioning balance of our entire social ecology. Failure to do so is to continue to deny to blacks access to those social and economic systems essential for first class citizenship in the United States.

The most cursory review of statistics relating to the economic and social conditions of blacks in the United States continues to demonstrate the growing lag between the philosophical and value articulations expressed in every sector of American life, and the day-to-day experience of life in America for the great majority of black people. The denial to blacks of their right to participation in the economic productivity of the United States and full opportunity to share in the benefits of that economic productivity not only perpetuates the social and economic enslavement of the majority of blacks, but threatens the national social development and the continued viability of the American way of life.

The perspective must be emphasized, loudly and clearly, that the government of these United States, in terms of its social welfare thrust and policies, must intervene in the market place to assure that there are contingencies present for the protection of vulnerable population groups -- the underprivileged blacks, the aged, children, and those adults who are being made superfluous by advancement in technological automation and the flight of industry from the central cities where these groups must live, to the suburbs that ring the inner-cities. The realities of blacks, today, continue to demonstrate that in most quarters this perspective does not exist. The social indicators available to us that relate to blacks affirm this observation.

Blacks live in the cities. Yet there is no urban policy of a kind that provides strategies for channeling federal leadership and funds directly to those areas experiencing urban hardship. Blacks and other poor persons are isolated from the social and economic systems while government, if not by affirmative policy then by absence of any urban policy, seems to be supporting, through subsidies and tax measures, the movement of industries and therefore jobs from the city. And this is at a time when blacks have already moved to the city to avail themselves of the economic opportunity structure that traditionally has been part of all American cities.

In many of the major cities blacks are more and more becoming the majority population group, but for obvious reasons their mobility to the new locations of industries is extremely limited. It is clear that the best interests of continued national social development, and social stability dictate a "domestic policy of the federal government...that involves greater



attention to what we have termed "urban crisis conditions." It should be underscored that while social welfare services are important instruments for national social development and meeting personal human needs, they are no substitute for a national policy that is committed to a total revitalization of the cities, and to policies that are designed to relieve urban hardship conditions.

No attempt will be made in this paper on social welfare to discuss all of the broad areas encompassed in the field of urban revitalization. Instead, this writer has selected for special attention four areas of social welfare policy and program development: welfare reform, services to children, services to the aging and mental health. The selection of these areas represent in this writer's judgement, public policy and program developments that intersect the entirety of social welfare's primary mission as it relates to black individuals, families and their children. At this point, it should be noted that each of these areas of social welfare, intersecting as they do black family life, are subject in their policy thrusts and program developments to a number of myths about the black family.

Dr. Andrew Billingsley in his article "Black Family Structure: Myths and Realities"<sup>1</sup> succinctly deals with these myths. An excerpt from his statement bears repetition as we approach consideration of the four selected areas of social welfare:

"The average black man wants a good job, a good home, good health, and a good education for his children. These are the requisites for a strong and viable family life.

"The popular picture of black family life is far removed from reality. Myths concerning black families have been perpetuated because of superficial analysis by social scientists and misleading media coverage.



"The first myth is that black families are largely broken families. The fact is that both father and mother bring up the overwhelming majority of black families. In those cases in which one parent is missing, the major cause appears to be economic. Among very poor black families there are large numbers of broken families...Among those black families with earnings of \$7,000 or more nearly 90 percent of the children live with both parents. Thus, black men and women are highly committed to marriage and to stable family life.

"A second myth is that there are only two major types of families: 1) two-parent families, made up of a father, mother, and their children; and 2) one-parent or broken families, composed of a mother and her children. The reality is far more complex. Many of the one-parent, and two-parent households contain relatives such as uncles, or nephews, friends, or boarders. The large variety of family compositions means that it is too simple to judge the functioning of all single-parent families by looking only at one type of family structure.

"A third myth is that low-income black families, especially those headed by women, function poorly in rearing children. Again the facts belie the conventional wisdom. For example, child neglect is far less common among low-income black families than among low-income white families. Furthermore, children from low-income black families perform equally well whether the family head is male or female. Given the severe economic constraints facing poor families, black low-income families function exceedingly well. To do this, most parents need, elicit, and gain the cooperation of other poor families in their neighborhoods. Only a small percentage are in a perpetual state of "dysfunctioning." But even for these families, poverty and discrimination are responsible, rather than any inherent problems of family structure."

The pervasiveness of poverty in the black community impacts on every facet of life in the community. Its demands on the social welfare system are beyond the capacity of that system to respond with appropriate, quality services. In 1975, 25 million Americans were listed as officially in the poverty group. Approximately eight million were black. Blacks comprise 11 percent of the nation's population; they comprise 30.8 percent of the poor. New federal census studies estimate that 11.4 percent of the nation's population now exists below the federally established poverty level, a level based

on guidelines established in 1960 for the now defunct War Against Poverty. The level of \$5,500 for a non-farm family of four and \$2,724 for non-farm individuals living alone is the experience of 24 million people in affluent U.S.A. It is of interest to note when considering the deprivation and misery facing blacks caught in the web of poverty that there are 20 states and the District of Columbia that exceed the national average of 11.4 percent of persons in poverty. These are states that have a high percentage of blacks as their residents.<sup>5</sup>

The incidence of need for income support and personal social services reflects, in large measure the malfunctioning of the interlocking set of social and economic systems referred to earlier in this paper. The need for social welfare services mirrors the failures of many of the systems in our society and our refusal to move in the direction of basic systemic changes.

The absence of sufficient money to purchase the goods and services required for an acceptable level of living brings in its wake a number of problems -- not only insufficient or inadequate food, clothing, housing, or medical care. It brings anxiety, tension, fear, and hostile response to the stigma attached to dependency in our work-oriented society. It feeds an atmosphere, for all members of the family of individual failure, of rejection, and denial. It is this family that is part of the group in our society now being described, by some, as the underclass -- those who are hopelessly beyond the pale of American middle-class values and behavior.

Little wonder, then, that the great majority of persons receiving public assistance, that fails to meet need even as defined by official government agencies, require one or more personal social services in order to survive at all.

One of those personal social services -- quality health care -- deserves closer examination at this point. Blacks have special unmet health needs and are obliged to live in areas of the cities and in rural areas that are the victims of the nation's fragmented health care system, where doctors are not available for crisis illness and certainly not for community preventive health care.

The unmet health needs of blacks in America requires little new documentation. One third of the nation's poor are not covered by either Medicare or Medicaid. For those who do receive medical benefits, they are quite unequally distributed by states as well as by national levels. In 1974, the national average expenditure per nonwhite (black, native Americans and Asian Americans) beneficiary was \$321 and \$560 per white beneficiary -- 75 percent higher.<sup>6</sup>

The infant mortality rate for blacks is twice that of whites notwithstanding the slow improvement that continues to occur over the years. The most recent data reveals that the infant mortality rate for blacks is 24.9 compared with a rate of 14.8 for whites.<sup>7</sup> A recent editorial in the New York Amsterdam News repeats the deficits in health care for poor blacks and Hispanics in New York City.

"The predominantly black or Hispanic districts have been found to have grossly low proportions of physicians, even though they are the very areas where physicians are most seriously needed.

"For example: Health Planning Area 18 in the Tremont section of the South Bronx has a population of about 10,000 and not one private physician available.

"Health Planning Area 59 in the Morrisania section of the Bronx has a population of about the same size and has no private physicians.

"Health Planning Area 20 in Bedford-Stuyvesant has a population of 19,000 and only one practicing private physician.

"Health Planning Area 59 in Brownsville has 22,000 residents and only one private physician.

"Meanwhile, on the affluent East Side of Manhattan: One Health Planning Area between 61st St. and 79th St. has 23,000 people and 974 private physicians; another Area, between 79th St. and 96th St., has 32,000 population and 1,089 practicing private physicians."

Similar data from previously identified social systems such as education, and housing underscore, again, the dysfunctional or malfunctioning nature of the systems insofar as blacks are concerned. The dysfunctional or malfunctioning nature of a number of interlocking systems serve to lock large numbers of blacks into the so-called underclass and place them in a position of dependency and reliance on public income support. The systems contribute to the incidence of welfare needs among blacks in America, and challenge a complete restructuring of the social welfare system if it is to fulfill its mission to black Americans and its role in contributing to national social development and national security. One step toward that end is the high priority given in 1977 by President Carter to national welfare reform.

#### Welfare Reform

Welfare reform is an extremely complex process, one that is faced with a number of policy issues many of which even in articulation are in conflict

with each other. One can hardly-rationalize into a comprehensive income support system the issues that emerge in program implementation, such as the boundaries of eligibility, vertical and horizontal equity, adequacy of payment levels, incentives and disincentives to self-maintenance, in-kind vs. cash benefits, separation of income support and work, etc. To these issues one must add the roles of the federal, state, and local governments in financing and administration, and the integration of the income support system with a variety of other economic and social support systems.

In 1977, President Carter proposed a welfare reform plan, now embodied in legislation as HR 9030, which seeks "to replace the existing federal welfare program with a single coordinated program to assure jobs, training, and income supplementation for low income citizens able to work and income support for low income citizens in need who are not available to work by reason of disability, age, or family income." This objective is one on which broad national concensus can easily be achieved. However, it is the methods by which these objectives are to be achieved that require serious inquiry, and full understanding by all sectors of the American people of the potential impact the proposed program will have on black families and their children before HR 9030 becomes the law of the land.

In order to understand the implications of the welfare reform proposal for black Americans it is first necessary to examine some of the more salient features of the bill.

1. By 1981, there will be established 1.4 million public service jobs, subsidized by the federal government. These jobs will be



available for the chief wage earner in families with children. The jobs may not last for more than 12 months, after which the employed wage earner, for eight weeks, must seek employment in private industry. It is estimated that the 1.4 million jobs will serve up to 2.5 million different people on a temporary basis during any year.

2. The new jobs program and the job search will be administered by the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) prime sponsor, and existing state employment service offices.
3. The new job program will be available to two parent families with children and single parent families with at least one child between seven and 13 years of age.
4. The federal government will encourage the development of jobs in the private sector.
5. The "Better Jobs" proposal seeks to build in an incentive to work by assuring higher benefit payments to families in which someone works, than to families of the same size and composition where no one works.
6. Persons assigned to public service jobs can receive only the minimum wage, again to stimulate an incentive for employable persons to prefer jobs in the private

sector to jobs in the government subsidized public service program.

7. In addition to the breadwinner being forced to terminate a public service job, after 12 months employment, and seek employment in the private sector, he/she must seek employment in the private sector before he/she is eligible for a public service job.
8. Finally, pursuing the incentive for work and upward mobility in employment, about 15 percent of the jobs in the Program for Better Jobs can pay 25 percent more than the minimum wage. This is intended to allow states to pay higher wages to work supervisors and provides incentives for extra efforts, leading to promotion in the job market.

The job component of the President's welfare reform unfortunately seems to rest on a number of unsubstantiated premises. It presumes that the problem of unemployment lies in those who are obliged to accept welfare. It presumes that people need to be motivated to work and be self-supporting. Finally, it presumes that this nation can sustain a 5.6 percent unemployment rate and not pay a social cost that can be more destructive to the national well-being than any enemy attack from abroad. (See Appendix A)

These presumptions cannot be supported by any facts in our history. These presumptions and the job creation programs on which they rest in the President's welfare reform require major surgery by the Congress. A number of very serious

weaknesses in the job creation and training proposal must not be enacted into law if human values are to be reflected in a program dealing with the most basic social welfare service and if the overall goals of the bill are to be realized.

. First, the Administration proposes to create about 400,000 new jobs, not 1.4 million new jobs as reported in various press releases. The 400,000 new jobs, added to these jobs currently in the CETA program, already filled and totalling the 1.4 million jobs will not begin to assure a "transition job" for every person able and willing to work. Indeed even 1.4 million jobs leaves much to be desired in assuring a job to each of the seven million persons who are unemployed. New York City alone could assign most of the 400,000 new jobs and still have a serious unemployment problem. Another disturbing fact about the President's job creation program is that it envisions a national unemployment rate in 1981 of 5.6 percent. Has it occurred to the policy-makers that this could mean a 11.2 percent unemployment rate for blacks and close to a 30 percent unemployment rate for black youth in the Harlems of the nation? Is this a viable goal for black people across this country?

. Second, the job proposal will set up two classes of public service workers. There will be those who are paid at the minimum wage level, who come through the welfare reform system, and those currently employed under CETA at a \$8,500 per annum rate! Either there will be two classes of employees working side by side doing the same jobs or, as in New York City, the close to 20 percent of city workers employed under CETA will have their salaries reduced!

. Third, there is no commitment under the Better Job Program to provide job opportunities for childless couples and single persons, especially youth. The job creation goals of the new Youth Employment Act are yet to be realized. With minority youth unemployment still hovering close to 40 percent in the black community, the welfare reform work plans, hopefully substantially alleviated by the Youth Employment Act, will either serve to write-off the employment rights of large numbers of black youth or the proposals, if enacted into law as now proposed, will create further rupture in the social fabric of the ethnic minority communities across the nation, and of necessity become a real threat to the welfare of all Americans.

. Fourth, it will be recalled that public service jobs can last only 12 months for an individual worker. It is presumed that this "transitional public service employment" will lead to employment in the private sector. But what plans are being developed and how soon, to assure the availability of additional jobs in the private sector? The inescapable need is for a permanent job with a wage commensurate with their contribution to industrial productivity for those who are unemployed, and who are able and willing to work! There is no assurance of a commitment by government or industry, to full employment at the end of 12 months on public service "transitional" jobs. There is, however a mandate that those terminated will be forced to engage in a work search. Whether intended or not, a policy that forces a work search for the 40 percent of black unemployed youth in the Harlems of this country, in a system that continues to deny them access to the economic structure is not only immoral but borders on insane social policy development.

Fifth, the track record of the several State Employment Services, with notable exceptions, do not give any hope for an effective administration of an already patchwork of employment programs. It is no secret that the State Employment Services, traditionally, have not been responsive to the adults and youth who are unskilled. Blacks have not had encouraging experiences with most State Employment Services as far as job placement is concerned. Rather, most State Employment Services have traditionally tended to be employer-oriented. The needs of low-level job seekers have never been one of their priorities. Unless there is a drastic reorganization of the State Employment Services, and a reorientation of large numbers of their staff to the needs of black youth and adults, there is little or no chance for other than disillusionment for those who seek entry into today's labor market through any efforts of local state employment services. Obviously, the Better Jobs Program of the President's Welfare Reform requires more than reform, it requires major surgery.

On the other hand, the President's program for a income support system, makes a quantum leap forward in meeting the criteria for a national and humane system. It bodes well in its basic thrust to improving the lot of blacks whom the present system continues to condemn to economic deprivation. While this statement has identified program components that require serious consideration and amendment by the Congress, it must be emphasized that for the first time, the nation has a proposal that responds affirmatively to the concept of adequacy and equity in relation to economic differences among the states, in as much as it offers a federally guaranteed national standard payment of \$4,200 for a not expected to work family of four and \$2,300 for an



expected to work family of four. The proposal speaks with the authority that comes from an objective analysis of the issue of categorization in the income support system, with the different eligibility requirements it involves, the excessive administrative cost entailed, and the barriers established for those in need in establishing their eligibility for different programs. The President's proposal establishes a single income support program for those who are in need with division made only between those who are non-working and those who are able to work.

However, the issues that are seriously bothersome to black people include: a) the time between now and 1981 before the program can become operational; b) the two-tiered program that violates simplification of administration and which may support the stigma of the present system against those classified as eligible non-workers; c) the inclusion of an income support program tied to a work requirement with only a limited commitment to legislation assuring jobs for all who need and want them and with a limited commitment to proposals like the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill; d) the failure to grasp and accept that poor people do not need incentives to work; they need meaningful jobs with adequate pay for those jobs; e) the absence in the public service job program of any opportunity for upward mobility in the job setting, the absence of fringe benefits or employment rights, and less income for public service jobs than that paid for similarly situated employees, and, finally; f) the absence of a structural linkage to the personal social service systems, public and voluntary. The questioned components of the proposal are undesirable as public policy and unless drastically revised are not likely to represent for blacks, the quantum leap toward income support reform referred to

concerning the overall program. They subvert the objectives and goals of the President's welfare reform effort, and, if unchanged they put into administrators hands tools that allow them to play out in their administration of the program the racism that continues to pervade the administration of much of the social welfare system in these United States.

Finally, there must be immediate acceptance of the fact that welfare reform cannot, by itself, solve this nation's serious unemployment problem. Welfare reform cannot protect children, the aged and others who are genuinely dependent, nor can it effectively strengthen family life in this country unless it is combined with a full employment strategy, a national comprehensive health care delivery system, a practical program of urban revitalization, and sound progressive measures for economic development. It cannot repair the decaying social fabric of the Harlems and South Bronxs of the nation without priority being given, at the same time, to housing, improved mass transportation to and from the centers of industry, and to new initiatives in human resource development for the millions already alienated who have dropped out of the nation's social and economic systems.

Welfare reform, constructed in terms of the human need of the economically disenfranchised must be linked to this variety of restructured and refinanced social and economic systems that impact for good or ill on the nation's families and their children. A national policy directed toward the protection of family life and the nation's human resources, responsive to the concept of social ecology, now, is a moral and political imperative that the Carter Administration must develop and then have adopted. Only then will welfare reform be meaningful to blacks and other poor people. Only then will welfare reform be truly meaningful as part of the nation's social armentarium.

### The Black Child

When one seeks to assess the status of black children in the United States in 1977, one is confronted with a disturbing fact that applies to all children in America -- those individuals so frequently referred to as "our most precious asset." The fact is that no comprehensive survey of the status of American children exists, nor is there in any one place an impact assessment of the multitude of programs financed by government and the voluntary sectors that have the well-being of children as their objective. As stated in the most recent edition of the Encyclopedia of Social Work "such a survey is probably beyond the present state of data collection and the art of measurement. A comprehensive survey would cover such major concerns as health, learning, safety, creativity, sense of fairness and other important values, preparation for constructive life roles and access to needed resources. Most reports really deal with interventions on behalf of children, not with how children are from the perspective of specified and accepted criteria." <sup>8</sup>

A second fact of no small importance is that most of the literature in social welfare deals with the black family from a pathological frame of reference. It focuses on the weaknesses rather than the strengths. The black child, when referred to in terms of policy definition and program planning is cast in this image of the pathology of the family.

Notwithstanding the absence of comprehensive data concerning children in America, and the usual approach to the understanding of the black child through the perception of over all, pervasive pathology on his family, demographic data reported about the black child can lead to but one

conclusion -- the black child in America who is in need of economic assistance and social welfare support is likely, in the main, to be sorely neglected by that system designed and financed to provide help. The evidence grows that the society is unable or unwilling to view the black child in his total social and economic situation, to use the knowledge it has about the requirements for healthy growth and development of children, and to allocate the material and qualified manpower resources that are required.

There are, however, black researchers and others who have succeeded in taking the black family and its children out of the realm of dysfunctionality and placing them in a setting that is a model of strength, coping capability, and survival techniques. Billingsley, 1968; Hill 1972; Ladner in 1971.<sup>9</sup> There are also, available, a number of "child social indicators" statistics of agreed normative significance relating to specified concerns that confirm the assessment that those black children who are in need, are most likely to be the most neglected groups of human beings in the United States. This deplorable condition is due to the dysfunctional nature of many of the sub-systems of social welfare that continue to view the child in "the dynamics of family life within the context of the black community (experience);" fail to perceive "the importance of children as part of family units rather than of each as isolated entities;" fail to understand "the impact of poverty and racism on all aspects of family life in the black community," and incorrectly understand "the role of the black father in the family."<sup>10</sup>

The data comparing behavioral manifestation between white and black children are usually interpreted as evidence that black families are so



multi-problemmed and overcome by social pathology, that black children do not have a chance for both health maturation and socialization. But that same "child social indicator" must be viewed against the statistic that more than two-thirds of black children live in families in which both parents are present. Billingsley points out that "by this measure, more than two-thirds of black families are stable. Of greater importance is the fact that 92 percent of black families with earnings over \$7,000 are headed by males. The only sizable stability occurs among poor black families." <sup>11</sup> It is when the social and economic systems fail black families and consign them, in large numbers, to poverty that child neglect becomes the life experience of the children. Insufficient income and the unavailable social supports can only result in child deprivation and child neglect. Some 3.6 million families, totalling 11.3 million individuals were receiving AFDC in February, 1977. Of that number 45.8 percent were black families. In terms of adequacy of income, the average monthly payment of \$75.43 per individual provides \$300 a month for a family of four. However, the Office of Management and Budget poverty guidelines for a non-farm family of four currently calls for an income of \$487 per month, 38 percent more than the average cash payment for an AFDC family of four persons. <sup>12</sup> This statistic is but one example of the many that derive from the complex of interlocking, malfunctioning social and economic systems that impact adversely on black families, resulting in economic deprivation, dependency, and poverty. Black children, then, are the victims not so much of family structure as of our family's failure or inability to achieve balance in the social ecology of the nation.



In summary, it must be clear from the comments made above that a complete discussion of the status of the black child in this country would need to be pursued within the social and economic facts that define the status of the black family in this country. It would need to include in addition to its deprivation, poverty, and dependency, such characteristics as black family structure, including that attachment of the blacks to their extended and augmented families and the coping mechanisms devised by black families to survive notwithstanding a denying, rejecting society for so many. It would need to deal with the achievements of maximum personal and economic potential. It would need to deal with the changing family composition with its increase of teenage mothers. It would need to deal with the incidence of child abuse in black families. It would certainly need to consider the effect of the two-tiered health system whereby people who can afford to, may exercise their right to freedom of choice and choose abortion, while poor people, many of whom are black, may not make such a choice and thus are denied their freedom of choice. It would need to discuss the unavailability of abortions to poor black women while, at the same time, denying their families the day care needed by their children, the quality education they need, less they grow up in a technological society as functional illiterates, and the work and income required to assure the healthy development of their children. Public social policy and the political processes that develop it have been too isolated from these considerations relative to the black family and its children. Neglect, benign or otherwise, of the unique and manifold needs of at least a third of all black children in America will continue until a new priority is assigned to the welfare of families and children,

and to the special needs for assuring the welfare of those black families and their children who know only deprivation and dependency.

I have selected at this point to highlight a condition that large blocs of black children experience because the child welfare system now in operation in this country was never arranged for black children; because the child welfare system in this nation never incorporated the concept of mutual aid, a basic concept in the coping mechanism of black families in America. And so, our child welfare system takes away children from their parents because those parents are deemed to be bad for their children. The system not only takes them away, but keeps them away without sustained, effective efforts to repair whatever was deemed not to be in the child's best interest, and then fails to provide a permanent substitute home and family for that child.

In a recent study by the Comptroller's office in New York City of the performance of a group of child-caring agencies in that city it was found that "less than one fifth of the children in the city's foster care system are being discharged from care annually to permanent homes (to parents, relatives, adoption)...We found that 108 (62.8%) of the test sample of children were kept excessive years in foster care by the five agencies. Most of the 108 should have been adopted...There are currently over 17,000 children in foster boarding homes city-wide who have been in care about six years on the average...we estimate that 10,977 of these children have been in care an average of 5.6 excessive years.<sup>13</sup>As of December 31, 1976, 28,627 children were in private and public care of whom 17.3% are white, 52.3 percent black, and 25.7 percent Hispanic."<sup>14</sup>

New York City is not atypical in its focus on separation and placement of children, particularly those "hard to place" (blacks) rather than in establishing a network of economic and social programs designed to support a strengthened family life. It is estimated that there are 100,000 black children in the foster care systems of this nation, with 40 percent to 50 percent of them eligible for adoption. For the black child, the situation is near crisis proportions. The recent National Urban League sample of adoption agencies across the country showed a downward trend in the adoptions of black children as recently as 1973 and 1974. To fail to provide a permanent home and family for a child who has lost his natural home is both costly and immoral. It violates all the tenants of child welfare as well as the concept of the best interest of the child as paramount.

As with the black family, there are a number of myths concerning adoption and black children. The most persistent of the myths is that blacks are not interested in adoption. The fact is that adoption agencies for too long have "screened out" and discouraged willing adoptive families for reasons that had nothing to do with the best interest of the child. Usually what was reflected in the "screening out" process was a lack of understanding that traditionally in the black community there may be a "dependent child" but rarely a "neglected child;" that the extended and augmented black family structure has always found a place for a child who needed care away from his own home; and that the imposition of middle-class white family standards in the adoption process are not only not applicable to black families willing to adopt children, they are not in the best interest of the black child who needs a permanent home with warm, accepting parents of his own, whether they be natural parents or not.

There is hope of federal leadership and support in the Adoption Reform Act of 1977 which has as its purpose "the elimination of barriers to adoption and to provide permanent and loving home environment for children who would benefit by adoption particularly children with special needs."

#### The Black Aged

The enactment of the Older Americans Act of 1965 documented the national recognition that to grow old in America is a hazardous experience. Increasingly it is being understood that to be old, black and poor represents a triple jeopardy within this fundamental hazard. Although there are occasional esoteric challenges<sup>15</sup> to this proposition, the research of Jackson,<sup>16</sup> Solomon,<sup>17</sup> Kent,<sup>18</sup> Butler<sup>19</sup> et. al. provides more than sufficient validation. While it is clearly evident that the endemic racism of this nation is the precipitating factor for this triple jeopardy, it is the outcomes which must be dealt with compassionately, perceptively, and realistically.

A brief review of four major categories (income, housing, health, and affirmative action for equal opportunities) can illustrate the differentials between aging as a black person in America and aging as a white person.

#### Income

Census data gathered in 1976 revealed that elderly persons in minority groups were severely hit by the 1974-75 recessions. Poverty among aged blacks increased in 1975 by 10.3 percent from 591,000 in 1974 to 652,000 in 1975. In the Spanish speaking community the percentage of aged poor jumped by 17.1 percent. It should be noted that the percentage of aged poor whites also increased during that period but not to the same extent (7%).



The potential of an elderly black person being poor is almost three (3) times (2.7) as great as for an aged white person. Over half (51.6%) of all blacks 65 or older live in poverty.<sup>20</sup>

This brief review of the economic status of 70 percent of the 1.8 million black aged who survive on incomes below \$3,000 per year (half of this number have less than \$2,000) helps to bring into clearer focus an additional factor of the continuing economic concerns of the black community. If it were not for the federal Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI) which aids the disabled and elderly poor (24 percent of its recipients are elderly blacks), food stamps, and other federal supportive services, the continued existence of the majority of black aged persons would be impossible. Thus it is understandable that the Caucus of the Black Aged lobbied at the 1971 White House Conference on Aging for, and continues to seek an income maintenance program which will provide a minimum annual income of \$6,000 for a single person and \$9,000 for couples.<sup>21</sup>

The rationale for an income maintenance program responsive to the needs of the black aged stems from the disparity in the income earning power throughout their working years. For most of their lives many of the present black aged worked in menial jobs as farm workers, domestics, and at other jobs which were not part of private pension systems and were not included in the Social Security system until 1950. In the future, the problem may not be as acute for black aged, although potential continued unemployment in the black community may not preclude it.

A new economic threat to the black aged may be arising as a result of recent federal legislation to raise the mandatory retirement age from 65 to 70. For the white community this legislation may represent a major attack



against "ageism" discrimination. For the black community it raises serious questions. To quote the warning of Hobart Jackson, Executive Vice President of Stephen Smith Geriatric Center, the oldest home in America for the black aged, and the founder of the National Caucus on the Black Aged: "There is a subtle and sneaky effort to increase the age of social security benefits and this legislation is part of it." Any increase in the minimum age eligibility for social security benefits is particularly important to the black community since the average life expectancy for black males is only 62.8 years, barely above the present minimum age benefit eligibility.

Extending the working age may represent increased career and life satisfaction for many in the white community. However, the nature of the careers and other factors such as the more extensive morbidity of most blacks is such that early retirement may be viewed as the first opportunity for a stable income, albeit minimal. This may be reflected in the Social Security Administration's 1974 statistics that three quarters of its beneficiaries apply for reduced benefits under early retirement provisions. This is particularly significant since 10.1 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries are black, but blacks represent only 7.7 percent of all retired workers.

The statistics of a recent study by Jacqueline Jackson suggest that extending mandatory retirement age to 70 years would not be particularly helpful to the black aged poor. According to this study, between 1964 and 1974 black males 65 years and older in the labor force decreased by 27 percent as opposed to a 19 percent decrease of comparable white males. This same study documented that during the period 1940 to 1974, black women age 65 years and older, in the work force, decreased by 20 percent; while white women, 65 years and older, increased by 43 percent. This despite the fact that in 1970 slightly

more than one-half of all elderly black women living in families were the only income recipients for their families?<sup>22</sup> Such statistics support the assumption that a longer work life eligibility will not increase the actual employment of aged blacks, but may affect adversely their eligibility for Social Security or retirement benefits if the next step is to increase the age of entitlement.

It is apparent that for 70 percent of the black aged population, the public policy commitments of the Older Americans Act for adequate income, opportunities for employment and the immediate benefit of proven research are not realities. Unless there is an unstated, but accepted, public policy that these commitments are not applicable to the black aged, these inequalities remain and must be addressed.

#### Health

The statistics relative to the size of the black aged population are an excellent reflection of health hazards blacks face in their struggle for survival in America. One of the reasons only 10.1 percent of all Social Security retirement beneficiaries are black is that twice that percentage receive their retirement benefits through the Social Security Disability benefits program. This is a testament to both the poorer health of the black population and the hazardous nature of the occupations in which they are involved.

Life expectancy has risen in the black population to 71.2 years for black women and 62.9 years for black males. Blacks have higher rates of diabetes and strokes than the white population and generally suffer more

often a multiplicity of chronic disease symptoms than the white population. As a result blacks are affected with a higher degree of physical dysfunctional problems than the white population at earlier ages.

Unfortunately the health care system is one of the more racist systems upon which the aged black person is dependent. As a health care consumer, the principal resource of the black aged person is Medicare. Because black aged persons are most frequently confined to urban ghettos and the rural South, access to quality health care services is limited. Private physicians often limit, or reject entirely, Medicare patients who cannot supplement Medicare to meet their payment scales. Hospitals, especially those in the South, refuse to admit old black patients, particularly those with chronic diagnoses common to black patients.<sup>23</sup> Thus black aged are forced to rely on public hospital systems which utilize out-patient clinics as the prime method for health care delivery. This is a particular problem since the vast majority of black aged (74-8%) live alone and are classified as poor or near poor. As a result there is little help available to assure consistency in monitoring medication dispensing and treatment.

The fact that most black aged live alone and in poverty makes it extremely difficult to separate health issues from housing issues. However, one of the most pertinent combined health and housing issues, is the lack of available or adequate nursing home care services. Currently only 3 percent of the black elderly are in nursing homes or homes for the aged. There is a well known myth that the black aged do not need such services because the black family by tradition cares for its aged members. This may have been possible when the black family operated in the more agrarian society of the rural South. To some extent, it is still possible with the aged member of a family who

serves a child care function plus supplementing the family income with Social Security benefits. However, the realities of crowded living arrangements and two wage-earner families often make the care of aged, ill or senile family members impossible.

Although the need for quality nursing home care is as critical today as it was at the time that the 1971 White House Conference on Aging made a series of relevant recommendations, the lack of availability of such services continues. It is tragic to note that the targets of the scandals of the nursing home industry are those homes which are primarily supported by Medicare funds and are the ones which would be most likely to serve black aged consumers because their only resource is Medicare. Generally the size of the capital investments required to develop a nursing home is too large for most black entrepreneurs. Until the late sixties there were a number of small black businesses providing this care, but stringently enforced safety codes have driven most of these businesses from the field. It is fairly obvious that the three percent utilization of nursing home services by a population affected with disproportionate morbidity levels reflects a lack of access to the service rather than any mythical socio-cultural utilization barriers.

### Housing

One of the major components of the triple jeopardy that the black aged face is the lack of availability of suitable housing. Substandard housing affects three out of every four elderly black persons. Approximately 60 percent of the black aged live in and around urban ghettos and the remainder still live in the rural South on farms. Because of poverty and more acceptance among family members, more black elderly tend to live with their children than white elderly. Approximately 28 percent live with families with a young head of household compared to 8.9 percent of all elderly living in such families.

Although the federal government, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the section 202 program to construct housing units for the elderly, has made a significant contribution to improving the supply of quality housing for the aged, only three percent of such subsidized housing projects are black and one percent of elderly blacks live in integrated environments.

The racism evident in the above statistics reflecting the availability of federally-subsidized housing to the black aged indicates the critical need for greater equity in the allotting of HUD funds to black non-profit groups interested in sponsoring housing for the black aged. Recent grants to the National Caucus on Black Aging, Smith Geriatric Center, and a variety of other community groups, usually church-related, suggest some progress in this direction.



The importance of the availability of this type of housing which can provide supportive social and health services such as hot meals, recreation programs, visiting nurses, etc., is tremendous for a population which experiences a myriad of chronic health problems, and the majority of whom live alone. Access to this type of housing with appropriate services minimizes chances of institutionalization in mental hospitals because of unsatisfactory living arrangements. Further, the increased provision of this type of housing will facilitate the resolution of some of the social hazards faced by the black aged such as fear of crime, lack of mobility, and isolation.

#### Affirmative Action For Equal Opportunity

Throughout this discussion of public policy issues which the Older Americans Act addressed in legislation and the 1971 White House Conference on Aging sought to analyze and stimulate Executive action, there is an underlying theme of civil rights abuse and violations. A serious Congressional consideration of these problems was reflected in the report to the Labor and Welfare Committee which accompanied the 1973 amendments to the Older Americans Act and expressed Congressional intent that the needs of low-income and minority older persons receive special consideration in administering Title III.<sup>24</sup>

The problems of old age and its lifestyle have spawned a new industry in this country. The range of services being offered under the original Older Americans Act and the 1973 amendments provide for a host of new social service professions which have almost no black members.

The issues which emerge from this fact are that there is little validity in the interpretations of public policy decision-making relative to the needs of the black aged and adequate services to meet those needs. Until very recently there have been few researchers with good black perspectives to contribute accurate data for planning. This lack of understanding has led to the development of such myths as:

"Black elderly have fewer felt needs because their sense of well-being is relatively high compared to their own earlier lives and the lives of their contemporaries."<sup>25</sup>

Yet the research of Butler,<sup>26</sup> Kent,<sup>27</sup> and others document that the basis of black under-utilization of services is related to factors such as treatment at the point of supervision, the lack of minority representation in the service professions, communication and perception problems influenced by a 31 percent illiteracy rate among elderly blacks.

Another myth is that the black family cares for its own, therefore there is little need for subsidized independent housing or nursing home care. Yet, 78.4 percent of elderly blacks live alone and 51.6 percent of aged blacks live in poverty. The reality is that discrimination denies them suitable housing and living arrangements.

Affirmative action employment continues to be a major problem despite the intent expressed in the 1973 amendments. There is a potential for a major breakthrough for minority contractors under Title IX Older Americans Community Service Employment Act. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees report included language for fiscal 1977 Labor HEW appropriations to make it clear that the

Congress expected the Department of Labor to enter into contracts with organizations serving the minority elderly. Further, Title X Public Works and Economic Development Act has provided resources from grants for the development of several minority employment programs.<sup>28</sup>

Both Titles IX and X offer the opportunities which have been long delayed. The statistics previously stated support employment needs of the black aged. Further, it is hoped that with the technical assistance of such programs of the National Urban League's Minority Aged Services Training Institute which are designed to build a minority perspective within the aging services system (state aging agencies) and increased minority aging advocacy, there will be more sensitive and effective local administration and employment opportunities will expand.

Training opportunities supported by Title IV-A which will enable blacks to become members of professions serving the aged have begun to emerge. Since these opportunities involve both the direct service professions and research activities, this is a development which should be encouraged.

#### Summary

Without doubt the fundamental issue for the black aged is racism. But barring attempting to deal with an issue which is pervasive for the black community as a whole, we must seek equity within what has been legislated as public policy. Scientific research has documented

the continued existence of the problems, and needs of the black aged as well as appropriate approaches to solutions. The social legitimacy of both the needs and solutions has been enunciated in the prestigious national forum of the 1971 White House Conference on Aging. Thus the black community will no longer tolerate the triple jeopardy its aged members continue to experience.

Mental Health and Blacks

Undoubtedly, questions will be raised concerning the appropriateness of including a section on "Mental Health and Blacks" in a statement focused on social welfare. The writer has decided to include this statement out of the need to emphasize the relationship of social welfare and mental health, particularly for blacks. Social welfare comes into play in the lives of people when institutions developed for their support fail to carry out their mission.

In early sections of this paper, the writer has advocated the need for achieving balance in the social ecology of the nation and delineated the imperative that exists to effect change in those social and economic systems that are either dysfunctional or malfunctioning insofar as individual, family, and community well-being is concerned.

Mental health problems among blacks and other minorities, are exacerbated by these same malfunctioning and dysfunctional systems. This is certainly not to say that there are not intra-psyhic disorders among blacks that have their etiology in interpersonal, and familial relationships. But mental health problems of blacks are intensified when institutions serve blacks less well than they serve others in the society. Such behavioral manifestations as depression, rage, despair, and alienation on the part of blacks frequently have their roots in the racist behavior of individuals and institutions in the white majority-controlled nation in which blacks in the United States



live. Indeed, it may be speculated that mental health problems, reflected in depression, rage, despair and alienation, may have a higher incidence level among blacks than the more classical neuroses, phobias, etc. The point to be made here is that the same complex of malfunctioning social systems that require the intervention of the social welfare systems contribute to mental health problems, particularly among blacks, by virtue of the status assigned to them as a group in present-day American society.

A tremendously significant group of papers have been prepared by black social scientists in connection with the work of the President's Commission on Mental Health. Dr. Eugene Cash in his article, "Extra-Dimensional Systemic Frustrations that Endanger the Mental Health of Black People" identifies four systemic pressures or forces that tend to weaken the coping strengths of blacks:

1. Periods of economic recession.
2. Polarization of racial hostility resulting from black and white leadership styles.
3. When behavior resulting from frustrations are dealt with by police, military, or other weapons based on power.
4. Whether the solutions to the frustrations involve only blacks or a unified problem-resolution effort with both black and white persons having equal problem resolution power.<sup>29</sup>

He closes his discussion of the frustrations that endanger the mental health of people with a summary statement that supports, from a

mental health point of view, a major thesis of this paper on social welfare and blacks. Dr. Cash writes, "the cancerous growth of American racism pervades all American institutions and, therefore, these institutions as they presently exist are not functioning effectively to serve the needs and aspirations of black Americans.

...A position of psycho-physical monism is accepted throughout this paper. The mind and body are one. Mental stress can induce physical stress. Black Americans who must cope with the impact forms of racism have, in doing so, endangered their general health."<sup>30</sup>

When one understands the major barriers to the utilization of mental health services by minorities, set forth by O. Jackson Cole in a paper under the same title, one is impressed with the social causative factors in mental health and the enormously important function for the social welfare system in helping assure the total well-being of the entire society. A few quotations from the author's paper will suffice to underscore the point:

"The mental well-being and mental health needs of blacks, members of other oppressed cultural/racial minority groups, and the economically dispossessed cannot be viewed nor assessed independent of a consideration of the institutional systemic forces which bear most heavily upon these individuals."

"Indeed, the mental health problems in general - are inextricably bound to economic and social as well as medical issues related to institutional racism" (underlining author's)

"Clearly therefore, one must question whether the disproportionately high numbers of minorities in institutionalized mental health settings do not reflect more the fact that the 'gate-keepers' of these institutions possess different value systems

and are of different racial/ethnic backgrounds,  
rather than inherent pathology of the institutionalized."<sup>31</sup>

Still purusing the social factors in mental health,  
Dr. Jackson with the assistance of Dr. Cecile H. Edwards,  
Professor of Nutrition and Dean of the School of Human Ecology  
at Howard University, identifies the relation of nutrition and  
environmental factors to the mental health of black children.  
He points out that black Americans generally suffer with a higher  
incidence of nutritional problems due to inadequate dietary intake  
and lower scores on standardized tests designed to measure  
intellectual ability and scholastic attitude.

Of significant importance to this paper's concern with social  
welfare and blacks, Dr. Jackson goes on to state, "In urban ghettos  
inadequate dietary intake occurs hand in hand with less stable  
family situations, poorest housing and hygienic conditions, greatest  
crowding of individuals and families, lowest use of medical services,  
lowest educational attainment, and highest infant mortality and  
morbidity. That there is a relationship between the quality of  
residential existence for many groups of individuals and the high  
incidence of psycho-pathology of one form or another has long been  
established in the literature."<sup>32</sup> (underscoring author's)

And finally, Dr. Jackson states that "influences in the  
environment, such as food, peer and family relationships, teachers  
and other adult socializers, housing, and opportunities for leisure,  
meaningful occupational involvement and educational, moral and value  
development, profoundly asset the mental health of the individual."

It seems clear to this writer that the interface of mental health for blacks and social welfare for blacks are components of a required holistic interventive approach to proving the social and economic well-being of blacks in America. The imperative for the development of human capital and the fuller utilization of human resources to meet human needs, now, is inescapable. The two must be interfaced to break the cycle of poverty and to facilitate mental health.

Dr. Jackson closes his paper with "As intercity families improve their own environment their mental health should also improve." Social welfare and mental health must find new ways to involve the consumers of their services as participants in policy definition, program development, service delivery and program assessment. Social welfare, to advance and realize its mission to families must join in coalition with other helping professions and human service enterprises. Healthy, productive, satisfied people is the goal of each of the helping sectors. Removal of all barriers to complete collaboration between mental health and social welfare is essential.

The Black Challenge to Social Welfare

In the opening Presidential Address to the 99th Annual Forum of the National Conference on Social Welfare, the President of the Conference charged the social welfare establishment with institutional racism, expressed in policies and practices, that rest on the belief in the inherent superiority of some groups and the inherent inferiority of other groups. He then went on to state that "it involves the systematic oppression of people, the negation of the common humanity of people, the exclusion of a group of people or individuals, for extrinsic reasons." "Racism," he said, "involves the denial of power, the power necessary for self-fulfillment." And then after recognizing the seriousness of the charge of racism against social welfare and social work in the United States, the President of the Conference stated, "An end to racism in the social welfare system requires redefinition of a multitude of things, including, for example, the structural adaptations necessary to facilitate incorporation of the black or chicano perspective in the delivery of services; revision of curricula in schools of social work to make this possible. ...and above all, an understanding of how the social welfare system can best be made to serve as a tool for the liberation of ethnic minority groups from the shackles of a malfunctioning, interlocking set of socio-economic systems."<sup>33</sup>

The challenge to social welfare is abundantly clear if it should continue to merit societal sanction as an essential institution in American society.



FOOTNOTES

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- <sup>2</sup>Arthur Schlesinger, "The Evolution of the National Government as an Instrument for Attaining Social Rights" in Toward New Human Rights, p. 26, edited by David C. Warner, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, 1977.
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- <sup>6</sup>Health Differentials Between Whites, Non-White Americans, Congressional Budget Office, 1977
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POLITICS

By

Dr. Charles V. Hamilton

This paper does not take the narrow view of "politics" as being limited to the periodic act of voting. There are, of course, other forms of political activity, but the major emphasis in this essay will be on one very important process, electoral politics. Whatever else is clear, it is certain that whoever gets elected to public office in this country is important to the kinds of policies enacted and programs implemented. In addition, electoral politics is a means whereby relatively powerless groups (groups possessing a minimum of other resources such as income, wealth and status) can, and frequently do, inject themselves into the decision-making process.

This opening, seemingly defensive statement about electoral politics is made because there is, in fact, a rather widespread (some data also suggest, growing) feeling that electoral politics is really not very relevant to policy outcomes. A number of studies by political scientists have documented the limited nature of the vote as a political resource. These studies recognize that the right to vote is a carefully guarded constitutional right in this country, but more and more people are doing it less and less. Cynicism and alienation are two reasons frequently given for this developing trend. "What does it matter whether I vote or not?" "My one vote doesn't count." "Politicians are crooked and are going to do what they want to do anyway." "The power structure controls things, so why should I waste my time voting?"

One should not overlook the devastating impact of Vietnam and Watergate in recent years on these attitudes.

Two writers recently drew some pessimistic conclusions about black electoral potential. They wrote:

"The election of a modest number of southern black officials will clearly not create the political power necessary to secure national full employment policies; nor to secure substantial changes in the hiring and wage and promotion practices of private industry; nor the huge subsidies required to house the southern urban minority poor decently; nor any measures, such as land reform coupled with federal subsidies, that might enable some of the rural black (and white) poor to remain in independent farming in an era of agribusiness; nor reform of the welfare system to insure an adequate minimum income for all who cannot or should not work; nor any one of a dozen other policies and programs that might improve the living conditions of the black poor."

Piven and Cloward, 1977

Commenting on the impact of fiscal problems in New York on black electoral potential in that city, these same authors concluded:

"The events of the urban fiscal crisis deprived them (blacks) even of the limited influence in urban politics ordinarily wielded by the vote. As the fiscal crisis deepened, with the result that financial and business leaders effectively took control of municipal budget decisions, the elected political stratum of the older northern cities was supplanted. Such gains in city and state electoral representation as blacks had made during the sixties were clearly of little consequence in resisting the slashing of municipal budgets when bankers and businessmen were, for all practical purposes, making the budget decisions.

...Still, the new black leaders, including the black city politicians who were caught in the fiscal crisis, continued to rely upon electoral politics to moderate the impact of the cutbacks on the ghettos. But this strategy was bound to fail."

It is important early in this paper to state unequivocally that the above quotations represent an ideological orientation toward (or against) electoral politics I do not share.



There is no question that voting per se will likely have little, if any, substantial immediate impact on the kinds of policies (which, incidentally, I endorse) listed in the first quotation; there is little question that the Emergency Financial Control Board in New York City seriously preempted the role of locally elected officials, black and white, in that city. But, nonetheless, I maintain that the mayoral election attempt by Borough President Percy Sutton, in New York, was worth the effort.

There are still decisions regarding the allocation of scarce resources, hiring practices, etc. to be made by the elected officials. Who occupies such positions, albeit diminished perhaps in power for this time, remains sufficiently important to make the electoral contest worth engaging in. Any other conclusion, it seems, reflects a naive, simplistic, and unnecessarily immature understanding of the American political system which is at once unwarranted and unwise.

It is particularly unwise for a relatively powerless group which enters the system already with minimal resources for political bargaining. It should seem to be a truism, not requiring elaboration, that in an intense struggle, no group willingly forfeits any potential tool or vehicle, however apparently limited in its utility.

Certainly, one might suggest that there has been an overestimation of the power of the ballot by some blacks. The history of the struggle to overcome voting denials is long and painful, and it might well have led to excessive expectations. One is reminded of a speech delivered 20 years ago on May 17, 1957 in Washington, D.C. by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He articulated the long-term goals of those who envisioned an increased southern black electorate.



"Give us the ballot and we will no longer have to worry the federal government about our basic rights. Give us the ballot and we will no longer plead to the federal government for passage of anti-lynching law. We will by the power of our vote, write the law on the books of the south and bring an end to the dastardly acts of the hooded perpetrators of the salient misdeeds of blood-thirsty mobs into the calculated good deeds of orderly citizens. Give us the ballot and we will fill our legislative halls with men of good will and send to the sacred halls of Congress men who will not sign a southern manifesto because of their devotion to the manifesto of justice. Give us the ballot and we will do justly and love mercy.

"And we will place at the head of the southern states governors who have felt not only the tang of the human but the glory of the divine. Give us the ballot and we will quietly and non-violently, without rancor or bitterness, implement the school decision of May 17, 1954. Give us the ballot and we will help bring this nation to a new society, based on justice and dedicated to peace."

These are certainly grand goals and lofty agenda items for such a weapon as the ballot. And certainly one ought to understand King's speech for what it was, namely, part of the ideological, inspirational rhetoric attached to an important civil rights movement. It was not part of a party platform to be achieved and implemented after the next election. At any rate, it could be and was argued correctly that a society such as this one that continued to "deny" (rather than to "give") the ballot had absolutely no cause or claim to identify itself as a viable political democracy.

The right to vote was achieved. Through a tortuously slow process, blacks were increasingly able to vote in the south. Many have voted. And yet, exactly 20 years later, after giving overwhelming support to Jimmy Carter in 1976, blacks still had to admonish the newly-elected President of his political debt to black Americans. The irony is not lost that Vernon Jordan of the National Urban League, a Georgian, had to reprimand Carter, a Georgian, and to take up the call for political legitimacy through the ballot sounded 20 years earlier by still another Georgian, Martin Luther King, Jr.

This paper, then, understands the protracted nature of the political process. It understands the relatively limited utility of electoral politics for achieving certain policy outcomes. And it nonetheless persists in the view that electoral politics must at all times be seen and utilized by black Americans not simply as a "symbolic" act, but as an act, if performed wisely and to the maximum, of reasonable potential for securing certain goals. Any other orientation would be defeatist and, in fact, historically incorrect.

1977: Increased Number of Black Elected Officials

In July, 1977, there were 4,311 black elected officials in the United States. They were in every state except South Dakota and Vermont, ranging from as few as one in Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, to as high as 295 in Mississippi, 281 in Illinois, 276 in Louisiana, and 251 in Michigan and Washington, D.C.

Most of these officials (1,560) were members of municipal governing bodies, and there were 994 members of local school boards, 334 members of county governing boards, and 162 mayors.

These figures represent substantial increases during this decade alone: In 1974, there were 2,556 total black elected officials; in 1970, there were 1,300.

Black Elected Officials

|                                          | <u>1970</u> | <u>1974</u> | <u>1977</u> |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| U.S. Senators, Representatives           | 10          | 17          | 17          |
| State Legislators, Executives            | 168         | 239         | 299         |
| Mayors                                   | 40          | 108         | 162         |
| Other Local Officials                    | 559         | 1,142       | 2,335       |
| Judges, Magistrates                      | 114         | 172         | 247         |
| Police Chiefs, Law-enforcement Officials | 47          | 111         | 200         |
| Members of Local School Boards           | 362         | 767         | 1,051       |

(Source: Joint Center for Political Studies, Washington, D.C.)

While the current total of 4,311 is still only about one-half of one percent of the nation's elective offices, the number is significant nonetheless. What is important is that in several places, where their numbers warrant, blacks are beginning and continuing to use the ballot to elect their own candidates to office. This is, of course, by no means a universal phenomenon, as this paper will discuss later.

Some Significant Mayoral Elections: Victories and Defeats

The office of mayor in the American political system is, in many (certainly not all) cases, a highly visible and viable one. Some positions are more powerful than others, but, on the whole, the mayoralty is looked upon as a significant office. This is especially true in our larger urban areas, notwithstanding the fact that most big cities where blacks reside are in deep financial trouble and experiencing serious fiscal problems. In fact, one might suggest that precisely because of this dire economic situation, the occupant of the city's chief executive office is that much more important. The mayor will be involved in such crucial questions relating to allocation of scarce resources: where and how to dispense community development funds, what posture to take on demands of city employees for salary and wage increases, what steps to take to keep and lure back private sector jobs, how to best manage such crucial services as police and fire protection to get the maximum results, how to give direction to zoning and planning agencies which will determine a great deal about the character of neighborhoods.

In many instances, then, mayors are expected to provide the leadership in a time when more than traditional clubhouse political skills are required to run giant municipal corporations.

Those mayors must try to balance municipal budgets, effect compromises between contentious racial, ethnic and class groups, as well as provide the inspiration necessary for urban survival and growth. These are not tasks for the mediocre or the slightly concerned.

This is the political and economic context in which blacks are vying for and coming into mayoral office. This paper will not deal with the approximate 29 mayoral contests involving blacks in 1977, but rather will concentrate on seven races: Atlanta, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York City, Buffalo, and Chicago. The first four represent victories for the black candidate, with three of these involving reelection to a second term. The latter three are instances of defeat of the black candidate.

#### Atlanta, Georgia

Maynard Jackson won reelection to a second term as mayor in October, 1977 with approximately 63.2 percent of the votes cast. (Election analysts consider that any candidate receiving 60 percent or more of a vote has scored what is traditionally called in American politics a "landslide.")

Professor Clarence A. Bacote of Morehouse College, one of the most reliable and perennial Atlanta politics-watchers, analyzed this mayoral race. He reported that some 85,978 (42.4%) of the registered Atlantans (202,712) went to the polls. Blacks turned out at a 47.2 percent rate; whites 37.1 percent. Jackson received roughly 93.2 percent of the black vote, and in a total candidate field of seven, he received 19.5 percent of the white vote.

Jackson was able to maintain the coalition of blacks and whites, business community and working-class support that has been critical in Atlanta election politics since the days of Mayor William Hartsfield. The results from selected white districts are informative. In the white 6th Council District in northeast Atlanta, Jackson increased his 23 percent 1973 showing to 34 percent. In another white area, the 7th District, he increased his vote from 24 percent in 1973 to 28 percent in 1977.

In addition to being called a "landslide," such elections are usually characterized as a "mandate." One columnist for The Atlanta Constitution summed up the results in the following manner:

"The mayor's mandate--and it was a pretty good one--by no means guarantees any instant solutions to all city problems. Nor does it suggest that everybody in Atlanta loves Maynard Jackson. But it does put the lie to the notion that there exists some great surging discontent among voters, some outraged majority eager to throw Maynard out of City Hall."

Apparently a substantial segment of voting Atlantans were sufficiently impressed with Jackson's four-year record to return him to office. An incumbent mayor in a major city, with fierce competition for his job will necessarily be scrutinized carefully. This was the case in Atlanta in 1977. The columnist quoted above concluded:

"He (Jackson) started his first term as mayor...with what seemed on some days an almost total breakdown of communications with Atlanta's downtown business community. He ended that term with important support from the business community, and with a number of downtown business folk feeling pretty good about his administration and about the prospects for the future. He has the opportunity in these upcoming four years to accomplish a great deal."

Mayor Jackson also demonstrated his capacity to make hard policy decisions when he dealt with the strike for higher wages by the city's sanitation workers. He resisted their demands on the grounds that the city's budget could not afford the increase. A large majority of the striking workers were black. This stance apparently did not hurt him with the city's black voters, who gave him, as noted earlier, their overwhelming support.



Detroit, Michigan

In September, 1977, incumbent Mayor Coleman A. Young faced a field of eleven challengers in the primary. He was seeking reelection to a second term. Young proudly defended his affirmative action policies in hiring more blacks and women on the police force. His opponents accused him of creating low morale in the police department. Young took credit for instituting neighborhood mini-police stations and for sharply reducing the city's crime rate.

In a city with a voting-age population of 1,017,608, approximately 303,890 votes were cast in the primary. (Detroit has a black voting-age population of 395,589). Mayor Young, and black challenger, City Council member Ernest C. Browne, won the primary and went into a runoff in November. Mr. Browne was considered the heavy favorite of the white voters, although Mr. Young was able to put together a significant coalitional support base: the United Auto Workers, Urban Alliance, and most of the news media.

In the November election, Young rather easily defeated his opponent, getting 59.3 percent of the vote, while Browne, winning close to 90 percent of the white vote, was able to capture only 40.7 percent of the total vote.

In the primary, Young had the courage (for a politician seeking reelection) to call for a school tax increase--a proposed three million dollar increase in the school property tax--which he called the "principal issue" in the 1977 primary campaign.

Enough Detroiters were sufficiently satisfied with Young's first term record to return him to office for a second term, but the Detroit News editorialized that "Young needs to build bridges to the white community. He needs to rally white support for his program of affirmative action hiring in the police department." Young sees as some of his top priorities the development of a downtown shopping area and getting started on a rapid transit system for the city.

Black voters gave Young 95 percent of their support in the general election. And for the first time in the city's history, blacks won a majority of the City Council, and a black will be the first President of the City Council.

In spite of campaign charges of his flamboyant lifestyle (the "playboy" image), Mayor Young, a 59-year-old, former labor union organizer, seems to have captured the imagination of many black voters who are not turned off by a mayor characterized as a "street fighter with gutter values." Young is perceived by many as a hard-nosed, street-wise, perceptive individual, rough perhaps around the edges, but as one who knows and understands the problems of a big city's "common folk." This image was overtly projected in the campaign.

Los Angeles, California

If any black mayor of a major city had to rely on white voter support to be elected to office, that would be Mayor Thomas Bradley of Los Angeles. That city has a population breakdown as follows:

61% - Anglo  
18% - Black  
15% - Latino  
4% - Asian  
2% - Other

In the April, 1977 primary, Bradley faced eleven challengers in his bid for reelection to a second term. His style is precisely opposite that of Coleman Young's—one account going so far as to characterize his 1973 election as a victory for the "colorless." His style notwithstanding, Bradley appealed to at least 60 percent of the voters who returned him to office in 1977. He received 288,586 votes; his nearest challenger got only 28 percent of the vote.

Bradley had a broad base of support from the local media, labor groups, black ministers, senior citizens' organizations, business groups, and Chicano and Asian groups. He demonstrated an ability (absolutely necessary in a big city like Los Angeles) not to be goaded into a race-baiting discussion. He stated in one candidate forum that while he understood parental concerns about busing, "I sense we are a law-abiding community. Whatever the court's decision, whenever it comes, I'm confident the people of this city... are going to harmoniously accept the law of the community and the land."

One of his opponents is reported to have retorted: "To sit by and say that you simply subscribe to what has to be passed down is kind of idiotic... The whites hate the blacks and the blacks hate the whites, we all know that. That is the truth and you don't want to accept it... The real trick is that everybody hates each other and I've seen it all over Los Angeles."

Whatever the racial sentiments of the Los Angeles voters, they apparently felt that Bradley was the best of the candidate pool to deal with them. And the overwhelming majority of those voters were white. Bradley campaigned on a record which boasted three consecutive balanced budgets without new taxes ( a feat not accomplished in the previous 12 years), a 10 percent cut in the city's property tax rate, creation of more than 6,000 jobs for the unemployed, aggressively pursuing federal funds (which had increased from \$80 million a year to \$551 million) and an increase in the number of uniformed police officers in patrol cars and on the beat.

"That's where the crime is and that's where I want them," Bradley said during the campaign. His landslide victory meant that he did not have to face a runoff election in May.

New Orleans, Louisiana

As of July, 1977, the state of Louisiana had ten black mayors. They served in places ranging in population from 354 (Natchez, Louisiana) to 9,643 (Tallulah, Louisiana). In November, 1977, the voters of New Orleans, the south's largest city now with a black mayor, achieved that distinction when they elected former State Judge Ernest Morial. This was accomplished in a southern city where the black percentage of the population is 45.2 percent, but the black voting-age population is only 39.0 percent of the total voting-age population. His victory was by no means a landslide, but he did win approximately 51.6 percent of the total vote, which is a reasonably good effort for a nonincumbent running in a southern city where the black population is in the decided minority. Morial captured about 20 percent of the white vote and close to 96 percent of the black vote. The exceptional thing about this electoral showing is the relatively high turnout of voters in sample black precincts (as reported by the Joint Center for Political Studies), which was 82.4 percent.

Morial's victory was the culmination of an intense legal as well as political battle. The runoff election was held on November 12, 1977, but it was not until November 8 that it was finally determined whether he would be able to run. In February, 1977, a federal district court ruled unconstitutional a section of the state law prohibiting a sitting state judge from running for a nonjudicial office. When Morial ran on October 1 in the primary, he had taken a leave from the state bench. But the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals overruled the district court on November 3. The following day, Morial resigned his state judgeship, concluding that the opportunity to serve as mayor "far outweighs the singular honor and security of this great bench."

Did this mean that his candidacy in October should be voided? The Federal Appeals Court decided it should not, and this left the way open for the voters to elect the city's first black mayor.

Nothing short of a massive, well-organized voter-registration and voter turnout campaign among blacks would be sufficient. In addition, Morial had to convince a reasonable number of white voters that, race notwithstanding, and the overhanging legal clouds aside, he was the better qualified candidate. Both efforts were successful.

New York, New York

Virtually none of the elements present in the above big city races were found in Percy Sutton's race to become New York's first black mayor. There was no coalition politics, although Sutton began his campaign by attempting to appeal to a substantial portion of the city's white voters. Black voters did not turnout overwhelmingly, with some districts reporting turnout rates as low as 33 percent. Sutton was not able to secure a commanding share of those black voters who did turnout. One estimate by Lloyd Dickens (a Sutton political and financial supporter as well as a long-time Harlem political activist) is that Sutton was able to capture only about 53 percent of the black vote. A combination of these factors, even in a crowded field of seven candidates, meant that the best Percy Sutton, who is not an unknown newcomer to the New York political scene, could do was finish fifth with approximately 14.5 percent of the total vote.

With approximately 552,000 registered black democrats in New York City, a heavy turnout of those voters for Sutton plus his getting an even smaller percentage of the white vote would have given him a good chance to make the runoff. This never materialized.



Sutton, a lawyer, had long experience and a strong record as a state legislator (1965-1966) and as Borough President (1966-1977). In the latter capacity, he was a member of the city's Board of Estimate. (This body votes on the city budget.) and there was never a question of his substantive ability to deal with vexing urban problems. The failure was in political organization and the inability (or the unwillingness) of the black voters to support his candidacy. Likewise, Sutton had, understandably, counted on rather considerable support from the city's highest turnout voters, Jews. But in selected Jewish districts in Brooklyn and Manhattan on election night, he was getting only 1.2 percent and 0.3 percent of that vote. Very late in the campaign when he began to concentrate on the black districts, more than a few observers concluded: "Too little, too late." This is surely a dilemma some black candidates face. If they concentrate too soon and too much on the black constituency, they are likely to be labeled as a candidate with a limited or "narrow" base, meaning, of course, he or she can only appeal to black voters.

Interestingly, Sutton had to contend with that charge throughout his campaign, although he had been elected several times as Borough President with a majority white vote, and although he started his mayoral quest deliberately concentrating on the city's white voters.

As could be expected, there were many post-mortems. But one comment by a black politician in Queens, Guy Brewer, seems particularly appropriate. Sutton received his highest percentage vote, not in his home districts in Manhattan, but in the 29th Assembly District in Queens; which led Brewer to write:

"Black areas with their teeming concentrations of black masses are still woefully under registered and even the pitiful percent of those registered do not show up in sufficient numbers to vote on primary election day...

"Voters by and large, even intelligent, well intentioned ones, have to be literally "pulled" out of their homes. To some, a telephone call suffices. But to most, a volunteer worker must ring their doorbells and say 'Hey man, leave that TV and get on down to the school and vote.' We did not have to worry about 'who' they would vote for but just get them to the polls. Finally, there were some who just had to be taken by the hand and escorted to the voting place. And therein lies the explanation of Percy Sutton's top vote-producing Assembly District in the entire five boroughs of New York City--money, organization, and 'pulling out' your voter on election day. A simple formula which has yet to be improved upon, but which a few black political leaders have seemed to grasp."

In virtually every instance where a black candidate has been successful in the race for mayor, there has been a very impressive show of voter support in the black community. This is a prerequisite before a candidate can begin to think in terms of coalition politics. That support might not, in and of itself, be sufficient (as in Los Angeles, certainly) but it must not be absent. It was absent in New York City in 1977.

#### Buffalo, New York

There are times, of course, when a consolidated black vote will not be sufficient to win, and when efforts to appeal to voters outside one's own base simply will not be successful. This was the case in Buffalo in 1977. Black State Assembly member, Arthur O. Eve, ran a winning primary race for the democratic nomination, getting 37.7 percent of the vote. His opponent, State Senator James Griffin, came in second with 33.3 percent. At this point, Griffin switched parties and ran in the general election under the Conservative Party banner. White Democratic voters chose not to support their party's candidate and voted for Griffin instead. Eve came in second with 31.5 percent to Griffin's first place vote of 42 percent. The Republican candidate received 25 percent of the vote.

The Eve campaign apparently used the organization and pulling techniques successfully in the black community, but he simply could not overcome the unwillingness of white Democrats to vote for a black candidate of their own party. The Joint Center for Political Studies reported:

"While the overall turnout of Buffalo voters was about 77 percent of those registered, turnout in sample black precincts was 82.6 percent, with 92 percent of the black vote supporting Eve's candidacy, and seven percent going to the Republican candidate..."

Assembly member Eve's campaign stressed the need for jobs in the private sector and other economic-industrial development programs. In spite of his efforts to project his candidacy beyond the black community and to appeal to the city's white voters, he was not able to do so.

#### Chicago, Illinois

Understanding Chicago politics means understanding the Cook County Democratic Party Organization. This is as true now, after Mayor Richard Daley's death in December, 1976, as it has been since the 1930s. Blacks have been an integral part of that structure, in terms of voter support, if not always in terms of benefits received. Patronage jobs remain the key to the party's success. There are approximately 30,000 jobs at the disposal of the County organization, and these are the foundation on which is built a tight, hierarchically structured ward-precinct operation.

From time to time, there have been successful challenges to the party at the aldermanic and Congressional levels. The most recent was Congressman Ralph Metcalf's victory for reelection over a party designated candidate. But essentially, at the city-wide level, the ability of the party to deliver votes remains intact.

When Mayor Daley died, many blacks in Chicago sought to have Alderman Wilson Frost, a black, replace him as Acting Mayor. But the 50 Democratic ward leaders chose former Alderman Michael A. Bilandic instead, and Frost was named chairman of the influential aldermanic Finance Committee.

In April, 1977, a primary election was held to fill the mayoral seat. A black state legislator, Harold Washington, who had been a long-time party stalwart, ran. The black party regulars supported Bilandic, and Washington made a poor showing, even in the black community. Unlike other cities where the party organization is weak or non-existent, it remains the case that electoral success at the citywide level in Chicago depends on organization endorsement. That organization, based in patronage, has the kind of "pulling" power, in the black as well as white communities, described earlier by Guy Brewer. Paul Delaney, a reporter for The New York Times, wrote the following account of the April primary as he observed it from the office of a black ward leader on southside Chicago:

"Alderman William Barnett is committeeman of the Second Ward. He dispenses patronage jobs from his headquarters on South Indiana Avenue.

Today, his precinct captains were out on the streets, making certain residents who were expected to vote for Regular Democrats got to the polls.

...The precinct workers function somewhat like case workers, performing services for the voters in their precinct—but for the price of support on election day.

...Tonight, after the results are in, Mr. Barnett and the 49 other ward committeemen will study a tabulation of votes in each of their precincts. Those captains who fail to deliver will find their jobs in jeopardy."

#### Some Observations and Lessons Learned

There are no startling revelations to be gleaned from these accounts, but some summary comments are in order.

1. In every instance where blacks have contested successfully for a top public office like the mayoralty, there has been an effective, locally-based

organization behind the effort. This has contained both extensive voter-registration and election-day turnout campaigns. And the black voters have given the candidate an overwhelming (usually in the 90 percent range) vote. In addition, the black turnout frequently exceeds that of the whites, which, of course, is not normally the case. (In the 1976 Presidential race, for instance, black turnout was 43.5 percent; the national turnout was 53.4 percent) Thus, blacks in some precincts in New Orleans in 1977 were turning out at a rate of 82.4 percent. This is partly explained, no doubt, by candidate attraction coupled with the excitement generated by the possibility of victory. (Studies have shown that turnout is increased where the voters perceive a good likelihood of their candidate winning in a hotly contested race.) But it is also the case that organized election-day "pulling" efforts are also very essential.

2. In most places, the secured home base has to be combined with deliberate efforts to form alliances/coalitions with other groups that can influence and deliver votes. This can probably best be done only after the organizational efforts "at home" have been achieved, precisely because other individuals and groups will then realize they are dealing with a legitimate force and not a paper organization. (The Sutton campaign in New York City appears to have reversed the process, to its detriment.) The "image" of the candidate, to whites especially, is important. The candidate will have a more difficult time if he or she is perceived by whites as the "candidate of the blacks." For those running as incumbents, this will be easier to overcome, because there will be a record to run on.

This "deracialized" image does not mean that a black mayor or candidate cannot adopt strong positions on racial justice, such as affirmative action in hiring city employees.



Coleman Young, in Detroit, has been forthright on this issue, but it has lost him votes in the white community. At this time, this is a political reality virtually all black candidates will have to face. On the other hand, if the candidate attempts to conduct a campaign which avoids important racial concerns, this will likely not win substantial black votes.

3. Except for a city like Chicago, most cities do not have strong, patronage-based political machines (Arthur Eve was able to defeat the local machine in his primary victory in Buffalo), which means the candidate will have to rely on his/her own personal and political resources. This also means that candidates must be able to articulate a greater understanding than before of the economic and social problems facing the cities. "Party hacks" are not likely to become chief executives of major cities in the future, whether they are black or white. This is different from decades earlier when political machines frequently ran and elected rather mediocre candidates. (One ought to be impressed with the qualifications of the blacks serving as mayors of America's large cities today: lawyers, civil engineer, former state judge). Most mayors will not have vast patronage resources to dispense, thus they must be able to build a record based on delivering indivisible (as opposed to divisible) benefits. A personality-based campaign (which relies more on style than substance) will probably not be fruitful, especially for black candidates who will be carefully scrutinized by the media and other groups for their ability to understand and articulate issues.

4. A great part of the ability to run a large city successfully will (as always) depend on the cooperation received from the private economic sector. That sector has always been important to the growth and health of the city, and that will continue to be the case. In every instance in 1977 where a black was

reelected, it occurred with the significant support from the private economic sector. Every sensitive mayor, black or white, recognizes the necessity for this public-private partnership. Black incumbent mayors in most instances have been able to handle that situation rather effectively. Jackson, in Atlanta, and Bradley, in Los Angeles, are good examples. Even Young, in Detroit, has been reasonably successful in this process.

In some cases, as in Richmond, Virginia, the process of bringing the black political leadership together with the white business leadership is just beginning.

Attorney Henry L. Marsh III was chosen mayor of Richmond in March, 1977 from among the ranks of the nine-member city council; there are five blacks on the council. Marsh stated:

"I've made speeches, written letters, sent messages and held meetings with most white business leaders. I've told them that we need their help and that they need ours. It won't work otherwise."  
(Metropolitan Richmond is 25 percent black.)

5. All big-city black candidates have stressed their awareness of the need to secure and maintain good contacts with federal agencies in Washington, D.C. One newspaper account stated that Coleman Young benefited considerably from President Carter's visit to Detroit in the fall of 1977. (Young was an early Carter supporter in the 1976 Presidential primaries.) Federal money is important to the future of the cities, and mayors are going to have to have the ability to get as much of it as possible for their constituencies. The evidence thus far indicates that black mayors are realistic about this requirement. They know that the economic capability of their cities, with shrinking tax bases, rising social service costs and unemployment rates, severely limit what cities are able to do for the residents.

Some National Issues and Political Developments

1. Election-day Registration.

In 1977, Congress put off consideration of voter-registration reform. There has been some sentiment for a system of election-day registration (simultaneous registration and voting). Black politics can only be helped by any system that facilitates the registering and voting processes. Arguments alleging potential fraud and unmanageability are serious, but should not be the cause for failure to simplify the system. Checks against abuse could be devised with reasonable penalties for violation. On the surface, there seems to be little justification for a two-step voting process. The ultimate goal ought to be to devise whatever processes necessary to maximize electoral participation. If this means some form of election-day registration, then it ought to be supported.

2. The Electoral College System and Electoral Structures.

The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved a constitutional amendment to abolish the Electoral College System. President Carter supports this move. Some blacks fear that such abolition will dilute the ability of black voters to affect Presidential elections, inasmuch as those voters are located mainly in large states with sizeable electoral votes. This issue should be reexamined, and alternatives, in addition to a straight popular vote, should be studied. One alternative would be doing away with the present winner-take-all system and giving candidates the number of electoral votes consistent with their percentage of the state vote.

There are a few studies to date which suggest that blacks are hurt, not helped, by the present Electoral College System and that white suburban voters are its main beneficiaries.

What particular Presidential electoral structure should be devised in an important issue to blacks? Judgment should be based on a number of variables: demographic data, likely mobility trends, competitive nature of the two-party system in key (large black population) states, and potential registration and turnout rates of blacks. More attention should be given to this issue by black political strategists.

Traditionally, minority ethnic groups coming into the local political process have found it to their advantage to advocate ward-based rather than at-large elections to municipal councils. This provides greater possibility, given population concentration, of electing one or some of their own to office. This was demonstrated in 1977 in Richmond, Virginia to the advantage of blacks. Black local elected officials should pay more attention to this issue in the future.

In addition, blacks should support moves to strengthen the powers of the mayor and resist efforts to diffuse that power among citywide commissions and agencies. It will probably be easier to hold the mayor politically accountable than other city agencies which are frequently staffed by civil servants insulated from electoral influence.

### 3. Black Leaders Convene.

At the Annual National Urban League Conference in Washington, D.C. in July, 1977, Vernon Jordan called for a meeting of black leaders to address themselves to critical problems facing blacks today, which were not being adequately dealt with by the new Administration. Fifteen blacks, representing civil rights, business and political organizations, were invited to such a meeting in late August. Subsequent meetings were held, and the group also met with President Carter in December, 1977. The value of such a group lies in its ability to bring together a representative cross-section of national spokespersons to address issues of national concerns to blacks and poor people.

Mayors of the kind discussed in this paper are on the cutting edge of policy implementation, engaged in day-to-day problems of trying to deliver services to needy constituencies. Black legislators (at all levels) are intimately involved in attempting to fashion worthwhile legislation. A group of the nature of the 15 can address themselves to a wider range of policy issues, as well as serve as a sounding board and barometer. The group consists of the following organizations: National Urban League, NAACP, PUSH, Congressional Black Caucus, World Community of Islam in the West, National Business League, National Urban Coalition, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, OIC, Legal Defense and Education Fund, National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, Martin Luther King Center for Social Change, Joint Center for Political Studies, The National Council of Negro Women and the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

The group represents a broadened base of the traditional "Big Six" civil rights organizations that met with Presidents in the intensive years of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. This, alone, reflected the changes in the black struggle. Such a group, today, is far more occupied with economic issues than its predecessor.

Roger Wilkins of The New York Times gave the following account:

"...According to several participants, this larger group prepared for its meeting with Mr. Carter with substantially greater care than was taken by the leaders in the Kennedy and Johnson years. The new group came to Washington with, as one of them put it, 'a whopping list of concerns,' too long for any one meeting. But they came early and a series of preparatory meetings was held with old Washington hands to winnow out all but what the group considered to be the most important issues for the President's attention.



"...Ultimately, the group narrowed its focus to three priorities: ample financing for embattled urban policy being developed under the leadership of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; substantially increased commitments of money to combat unemployment, particularly among black youth, and a plan developed in the Office of Management and Budget for the reorganization of the equal employment enforcement functions of the Federal Government."

There is great likelihood that the third goal will be achieved shortly, giving the functions to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Thus, in one sense, 1977 was a very important "political" year for blacks. New people went to Washington to serve at various levels in the new Administration. Some significant new electoral victories were achieved at the local level, such as in New Orleans and Richmond, Virginia. A new group of policy-attentive leaders showed signs of becoming a useful focus for the coordinated articulation of policy issues, something that has not existed for well over a decade.

At the same time, 1977, politically, was a year that showed continued signs of a long struggle for blacks in the offing. Black electoral turnout in some places, as in New York City, was abysmally disappointing. The Carter Administration gave frequent indication that it was not yet prepared to put its full support behind some absolutely crucial economic measures that would benefit black Americans as well as many poor citizens. The Bakke case surfaced a number of latent fears about the efficacy of a forceful affirmative action policy. And these fears are certain to be heard from in the future, notwithstanding how the Supreme Court rules in the Bakke case. On this issue, blacks will not be able to take for granted the cooperation of some of their traditional allies in the civil rights movement. This might seem confusing at first to some observers, but it should not be; politics frequently calls for shifting alliances and coalitions. And, with affirmative action especially, it is likely the case that the political terrain of coalition politics will certainly take a different form in 1978.

In sum, 1977 was a year that demonstrated once again the clear necessity to understand politics as a painfully protracted--but hopefully promising--process.

# # #

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the evidence presented in the preceding pages, an almost inescapable conclusion emerges -- that this report, "The State of Black America-1978," could with more than enough justification, be sub-titled, "A Decade of Lost Opportunities"...Opportunities lost in the sense that the momentum to improve the quality of life in the ghettos of America that grew out of the Civil Rights Movement of the 60s, the urban riots that followed, and the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders was allowed to falter and eventually disappear.

Programs were started, under-funded, and then killed when they did not produce spectacular results. Commitments were made, honored for a short time, and then forgotten. The media gave unaccustomed attention to the condition of blacks, and then went on to other matters. Almost as quickly as the plight of black America became a priority item, the priority was withdrawn.

Trying to establish who was responsible -- the two past national administrations, the Congress, or the American people -- serves no useful purpose. Looking back and attempting to assess blame is rarely productive, and perhaps in this instance, all of us in some measure bear some responsibility.

What is clearly apparent is that the illnesses that afflicted black communities in 1967 -- unemployment, poverty, alienation, and the entire litany of the endemic problems of the ghetto -- have not cleared up, and indeed, the patient has grown sicker.

The extent of the illnesses can be illustrated by bringing together certain key passages from the preceding papers.

The Economy

"In considering the state of the black economy, there is much reason to be disappointed. The gains during the past year were minimal, and the prospects for the immediate months ahead are not optimistic. The nation faces serious economic difficulties, and while progressive and enlightened public policy can do much to arrest deterioration in economic activity, it is unlikely that all groups will gain equally from the economic progress that is generated." ...DR. BERNARD E. ANDERSON

Economic Status of Black Families and Children

"Although there are signs of some degree of economic recovery in the nation, as a whole, no such recovery has reached the black community. Black unemployment in 1977 -- even as officially defined -- was at the highest level ever recorded for blacks. While most white workers have been experiencing a decline in unemployment, joblessness has been on the rise among black women heads of families and among black teenagers. In fact, black female heads of families are receiving the major brunt of the current recession/depression." ...DR. ROBERT B. HILL

Education

"Despite the progress which can be cited in a number of areas, black Americans in 1978 can look forward to continued struggle in their efforts to achieve equality of educational opportunity. Despite the increase in years of education completed, in increased attendance in post-secondary education and in graduation from colleges and professional schools, it seems clear that black Americans must continue to run fast just to stand still." ...DR. BERNARD C. WATSON

### Housing

"The greatest threat to an effective federal urban and housing program -- and to blacks, in particular -- is the Carter Administration's essential fiscal conservatism. Thus expanded aid to the cities and the disadvantaged seems destined to occasion a collision between the rate of expenditure involved and the President's commitment to a balanced budget by fiscal 1981." ...DR. ROBERT C. WEAVER

### Social Welfare

"The most cursory review of statistics relating to the economic and social conditions of blacks in the United States continues to demonstrate the growing lag between the philosophical and value articulations of every sector of American life, and the day-to-day experience of life in America for the great majority of black people. The denial of blacks of their right to participation in the economic productivity of the United States and full opportunity to share in the benefits of the economic productivity not only perpetuates the social and economic enslavement of the majority of blacks, but threatens the national social development and the continued viability of the American way of life." ...DR. JAMES R. DUMPSON

### Politics

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at the local level, such as in New Orleans and Richmond, Virginia. A new group of policy-attentive leaders showed signs of becoming a useful focus for the coordinated articulation of policy issues, something that has not existed for well over a decade.

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#### Additional Comments

Some additional comments about what took place in black America in 1977 are now in order.

The year that began with such high hopes on the part of black Americans, ended for them with considerable disappointment. In November of 1976, they voted overwhelmingly for Jimmy Carter who seemed to them to hold out the best hope for ending the neglect, indifference and sometimes hostility they had encountered in Washington over the past eight years.

Because their hopes had been so high, their disappointment was magnified in 1977 when the Carter Administration gave unmistakable signs that it was more interest in balancing the budget than in providing jobs for the jobless.

To the Administration's credit, it did, half-way through the year, make a number of positive moves in the direction of rebuilding the cities and creating jobs. A youth jobs bill was passed, a welfare reform measure was proposed, and agreement on a compromise Humphrey-Hawkins Bill was reached. The President also created a high-level task force to put together a new urban policy.

Such steps, while welcome, did not begin to deal with the problems facing the cities and for this, the Administration has to share part of the blame. It set a balanced budget by 1981 and an energy policy as priorities and other issues were put on the back burner, or at least treated with less urgency. But this was partly offset by its openness, its willingness to consult with groups previously ignored in policy-making, and by the energetic activities of some departments.

For all the shortcomings of the Administration, a share of the blame must be allocated to a Congress that has refused to act creatively on behalf of the cities and the deprived. It strains a sense of reason to accept the logic that finds Congress treating the future of the Panama Canal as a high priority issue, while the nation is filled with millions of poor and unemployed people.

There were other matters of importance to black America that occurred in 1977, that require some further examination if a complete picture of "The State of Black America-1978" is to be obtained.

#### Affirmative Action

Over the past year black Americans continued to witness the legal erosion of affirmative action and a growing public reaction against such programs usually accompanied by charges of "reverse discrimination."

The Supreme Court in its past term continued in its civil rights rulings to elevate the principle of proving the intent to discriminate. In its Arlington decision, a constitutional-non-employment zoning case, the Court gave an early warning signal to employment discrimination

litigants that remedies for correcting past discrimination may not be issued solely on a showing of the results of alleged discrimination. A new standard -- the intent to discriminate would now have to be considered crucial.

Consequently, a further blow to civil rights supporters of affirmative action occurred in May, 1977 when the Supreme Court issued its controversial seniority ruling. Essentially the Court determined the pre-1965, racially neutral seniority systems which perpetuates current discrimination are not per se illegal. This decision coupled with Arlington only solidified the retreat in the drive for effective affirmative action principles.

Perhaps the constantly burning legal issue of tantamount importance to all Americans this past year was the "reverse discrimination" controversy. The term "reverse discrimination" came into popular usage in 1977 as opponents of affirmative action used it as a rallying cry in much the same manner as the term "forced busing" had been used earlier. Throughout 1977 attention, emotions and diverse forces mobilized as the Supreme Court moved closer toward a decision in the well-publicized Bakke case.

Despite all the furor over Bakke, however, a decision in his favor will probably not have a great impact on affirmative action programs other than those of the university Bakke wants to enter. Racially-based remedies for racially-based discriminatory effects are firmly established in law and even with the Supreme Court's current conservative approach, the principle will probably not be overturned.

The danger in the Bakke case is that anything less than a rejection of his suit will be interpreted as a signal by many people that they can choke off affirmative action.

A positive development in the field of affirmative action was the issuance of a set of recommendations by a special task force in the Office of Management and Budget that would materially strengthen the federal government's enforcement capabilities. The key points in the recommendations -- which closely mirror recommendations made by the National Urban League last summer -- would place all contract compliance in the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, instead of scattered among 11 different agencies. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission would become the lead agency for equal employment opportunity within the federal government, it would have expanded enforcement power, and it would take over some of the responsibilities previously exercised by the Civil Service Commission.

It is worth noting in this discussion, that the branch of government with the worse record on affirmative action is the branch with the constitutional responsibility of passing legislation in this and other areas -- the Congress itself. Conversely, the agency with the best record is the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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Foreign Policy

The year, 1977, brought significant changes in U.S. foreign policy most of which resulted from the change in Administrations. These changes generally reflect a positive gain for black Americans in their attempt to influence international affairs.

The appointment of Andrew Young to the post of U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., was a most significant step for blacks in the area of foreign affairs. Although strongly criticized by the press and even threatened with impeachment by some conservative members of Congress for his honest statements on the situation in Africa, Ambassador Young's prestige has continued to grow abroad, especially among the African nations.

Other actions regarded as positive by Black America was the appointment of a black man, Terence A. Todman to the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, and a significant increase in the number of black Ambassadorial appointments.

The year also saw black America react vigorously and vocally to the continued racism of the Union of South Africa, and most specifically to the death of African civil rights leader Steve Biko, under conditions that appalled the world, and the harsh repressive measures taken by South Africa to still black and white voices of dissent. There were also growing demands from the black community for a reassessment and a reappraisal of American public and private investments in South Africa as well as American military ties to that nation.

Black America also found interest in the debate over the future of the Panama Canal with its sympathy clearly in favor of approving a treaty that would safeguard American interests, while demonstrating to the world that this nation is prepared to deal fairly and equitably with smaller nations.



## ENERGY

While blacks played no major role in the development of a national energy policy or in the deliberations as to what impact a new energy policy would have on the poor, it was obvious during the year that they have vital interests in such a policy.

Although few blacks are employed in the oil producing companies, in the companies which do the exploration, or in those which refine and transport the product, the jobs of many blacks are tied to some type of industrial facility which depends upon a reliable source of energy.

Also, Americans with low incomes use energy mainly for essentials, paying somewhat more per unit of energy consumed, especially for electricity. While somewhat of an anomaly, this practice is based on the policy that the more energy used, the smaller the BTU charge. The result is that poor and near-poor households consume less energy on the average than middle and upper income Americans, but typically pay higher prices for each unit consumed, so that each increase in energy rates affects them disproportionately.

Gasoline consumption also poses a special problem for the poor since data show that cars purchased by low-income households are generally second hand and fuel inefficient, thus reducing the number of miles obtained from each gallon of gasoline.

It should be noted that higher energy prices and energy taxes, which have not been demonstrated to be effective conservation tools, impact disproportionately on consumers with low and fixed incomes.

Finally, in the energy debate of 1977, the needs of the poor were not addressed in any substantive manner.

In concluding this report and before setting forth its recommendations, the National Urban League believes that it is important to point out that a careful reading of the individual papers contained in "The State of Black America-1978", will disclose an almost universally common theme readily apparent in several of them—that the factors keeping people in poverty are inter-related and if efforts to remove people from a state of deprivation are to be successful, this truism must not be ignored.

Dr. James Dumpson states the matter in this manner:

"The social welfare system, in order to carry out its mission to the poor, the near-poor and those in danger of becoming economically and socially dependent, a disproportionate number of whom are black, must interlock with well functioning housing, employment, educational and health care systems."

The views of Dr. Robert C. Weaver are in accord:

"Inferior housing and inferior education go hand in hand, and together they foster and reinforce inferior employment opportunities and inferior incomes. They are parts of a cycle of intertwined causes and effects, strengthening each other like the strands of a rope which binds and chokes millions of American families."

To treat the shameful illness within our society, to overcome the results of centuries of slavery and more than a hundred years of overt discrimination and segregation, America must be prepared to attack that illness through a variety of approaches. Curing the patient will not be easy, but the only alternative is to allow the illness to worsen and spread.

As we began "The State of Black America-1978" with reference to the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, we close it with a statement from that document.

"It is time now to turn with all the purpose at our command to the major unfinished business of this nation. It is time to adopt strategies for action that will produce quick and visible progress. It is time to make good the promises of American democracy to all citizens--urban and rural, white and black, Spanish-surname, American Indian, and every minority group."

With the Administration and the overwhelming majority of the American people so much in favor of human rights -- a principle that we unhesitatingly applaud -- it is proper to remind our fellow countrymen that other nations will be more willing to accept and support our position, when human rights are shared by all American citizens.

# # #

RECOMMENDATIONS

THE ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

1. Any tax cut should be limited to the replacement of proposed social security tax increases and to tax benefits to industry for job training, job placement, and investments in high unemployment areas and in the cities. A broader tax cut would result in an even larger deficit in the federal budget and this, in all probability, would be used as a rationale for cutting back on vitally needed urban and social welfare programs.

2. The compromise Humphrey-Hawkins Bill as accepted by the President should be passed by Congress this year. Although the bill does not immediately create new jobs, it does set a full employment policy as a national priority.

Actions should also be taken to greatly increase publicly funded training programs, provide incentives to the private sector to create jobs at prevailing wages, and offer assistance to the private sector in the training of the jobless and young people.

3. Public service employment should be vastly expanded in 1978 with special targeting to the disadvantaged unemployed. The jobs should be at prevailing wages and in activities that improve the physical and social environment. Priority should be given to creating new public service jobs rather than using these jobs to substitute for normal municipal service staffing.

4. Funding for youth employment and training programs should be increased to reduce youth unemployment by half in 1978. These programs should be targeted so that a larger part of the funds go to create jobs in cities where the youth unemployment rate has exceeded 15 percent for the past six months.

5. The President should make a clear reaffirmation of the Administration's commitment to the pursuit of equal employment opportunity in both the public and private sectors. Such a statement should be accompanied by a review of the resources of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance to insure that these enforcement agencies have sufficient funds to carry out their missions.

Further, the recommendations by the special task force of the Office of Management and Budget on the reorganization of the federal government's equal opportunity enforcement capabilities, should be implemented.

#### URBAN POLICY AND HOUSING

6. A national urban policy should go beyond the simple physical rehabilitation of the cities and include measures that would materially improve the lives of urban residents. Such a policy should encompass such vital needs as better housing, improved education, decent jobs at decent wages, minimum living standards to replace the welfare system, health care, physical safety and adequate public transportation.

The policy should also include at a minimum, an urban development bank to stimulate private investment in the inner-city; a mechanism insuring significant minority participation in economic and business development programs, and requirements for the targeting of federal funds to areas where the need is greatest, as opposed to the present program of revenue sharing.



7. It is incumbent upon the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which is in the process of reissuing regulations for the Community Development Block Grant Program that will target federal community development assistance to low and moderate-income neighborhoods,\* to establish an effective monitoring and enforcement mechanism to ensure that the policy is carried out.

There should also be greatly increased enforcement of the federal fair housing laws and federal funds should be withheld from areas that do not have effective affirmative housing marketing mechanisms.

8. The President should issue a firm commitment to providing for the nation's housing needs as a part of any urban policy statement and the Administration should seek appropriations for 600,000 units of federally assisted housing.

9. Stronger middle and upper-income inner-city housing markets and increased policy initiatives toward attracting such groups have greatly increased the likelihood of massive displacement of lower-income residents of center cities. The Administration should, therefore, immediately undertake two parallel courses of action:

- a) The promulgation of policies restricting inner city displacement which would require statements of displacement impact on the part of all users of federal funds in urban areas. The federal government should also establish monitoring systems to enable implementation of the non-displacement policy.
- b) The creation of mechanisms to insure effective participation of center-city neighborhoods and institutions in developing and implementing their own neighborhood rehabilitation and revitalization plans.

EDUCATION

10. Full funding of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is long overdue and should be provided immediately. Formulas should count all AFDC children for full entitlement rather than the 2/3 provision in the current formula. Targeting of additional funds for districts with large concentrations of Title I eligible children should be included. Economic deprivation should remain the sole basis for entitlement.

11. At the college level, student aid programs should be revised so that more funds are made available as grants, scholarships, fellowships and work-study opportunities, rather than as loans. The increase in such funds would greatly benefit poor students and would widen their choices of colleges and universities.

12. The federal government should continue and expand its efforts to create Minority Centers for Graduate Education, not only in science and engineering, but in other critical fields where minorities are underrepresented.

13. A long-term and consistent program of federal support for historically black colleges should be developed which takes into account the nature of the economically depressed student body which attends such schools.

14. Regardless of the outcome of the Bakke Case, the federal government should not relent in its insistence that institutions of higher learning receiving federal monies, adopt and implement effective affirmative action plans for both faculty and students. In the absence of such plans, federal funds should be withdrawn from the institution.

The government should also adopt programs that provide additional financial assistance to colleges and universities which develop effective programs for increasing the enrollment of minorities in graduate and professional schools.

15. A national task force should be appointed by the President to study I.Q. and achievement testing and to make recommendations as to how the results of these tests can be utilized to improve instruction in urban public schools.

16. The federal government should provide special funding for the development of strategies for resolving the failure of the nation's schools to teach black and other non-mainstream students the necessary language skills for survival in the United States.

Public schools should teach reading, writing and "Public English" to non-mainstream students in a way that will not ignore, denigrate or eradicate the rich language tradition values and behaviors of the students. Black students must be taught language skills which will facilitate access to a full range of economic, political and social opportunities.

#### HEALTH AND THE FAMILY

17. A national comprehensive, consumer-oriented, federally supported health security system that would assure quality and accessible health care to all Americans regardless of race, economic condition or place of residence should be established in 1978.

18. Increased federal support should be directed to special initiatives, community education and outreach, black medical schools, minority students, inner-city hospitals, community health and mental health programs, all of which seek to close the gap between the health status of whites and non-whites.

19. Federal income tax guidelines should be modified to include an adequate tax credit for child care expenses that is especially designed to benefit low-income families that must depend on relatives for vital day care services.

20. Federal assistance to day care centers should be expanded and uniform standards should be developed.

21. Current federal and state regulations that deny vital public assistance and other social services to needy families that because of economic pressures have to move in or "double-up" with relatives, should be abolished. More sensitive policies should be developed that strengthen the self-help efforts of relatives among low-income and minority families.

22. There should be aggressive federal support for the Adoptions Reform Act of 1977. Emphasis should be directed to the early placement of minority children, currently lodged in the foster care system, in permanent homes. Financial incentives and health and social services should be extended with the primary thrust directed to the natural parents, extended family members and the home community.

#### WELFARE REFORM

23. The Administration's welfare reform plan is a major advancement over the present system, but it is in need of further refinement if it is to accomplish its basic intent. As an example, while the basic benefit level will represent an increase over what many AFDC families are currently receiving, it still compels the overwhelming majority of participants to subsist below the poverty level. The minimum floor should thus be raised.

24. The plan should be revised so as to treat all people in need alike, avoiding the present format which divides recipients into different categories, each with its own benefit scales and conditions.

25. It is recommended that the welfare reform plan be strengthened by making the welfare-related jobs program part of a national full employment policy divorced from the welfare program, and by using the refundable income tax as the major income assistance device.

#### YOUTH

26. Creation of a permanent Presidential Youth Commission with a chairperson appointed by the President and designated as Presidential Youth Advisor with an office in the White House is recommended. The advisor should participate in Cabinet meetings. The Commission would be charged with the task of encouraging both the public and private sectors to invest in the development of the nation's youth. This commission should be constituted as a policy-generating body with authority to:

- a) Formulate and coordinate policy;
- b) Coordinate leadership;
- c) Develop resources for youth in both the public and private sectors; and
- d) Involve Congress in policy development and recommend appropriate actions.

27. Youth development offices should be created within all government agencies. Their function would be to incorporate in all major government contracts, grants and programs, resources for youth, including work experience, leadership development, recreation, career guidance and youth service opportunities.



28. A national youth service program should be established which would enlist youth, both rural and urban, between the ages of 16 and 24 in a program to rehabilitate their environment/community. The program would include training, career counseling, supportive health medical services and academic reinforcement.

#### POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

29. A system of universal registration for Presidential and Congressional elections that would enable a citizen to vote on Election Day by appearing at the polls with proper identification, should be adopted. The system would bring into the electoral process many individuals now excluded because of cumbersome registration procedures.

30. States should be encouraged to use Election Day registrations for state and local elections as well.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

31. The justified concern of the nation over denials of human rights in a number of countries, should not divert its attention from the brutal racial repression being practiced in the Union of South Africa. The continued refusal of the South African government to meet any of the legitimate demands of the black majority constitutes a threat to world peace and should be so regarded.

In light of this, American public and private institutions with investments in the Union of South Africa should reassess and reappraise their positions in that country with a view toward influencing the racial policies of South Africa. The American government should undertake the same process vis-a-vis its military ties to South Africa.

32. The Administration's appointment of a number of black Ambassadors to non-traditional posts is to be commended. There still, however, remains the need to increase the number of minorities in the State Department and to encourage and promote the career aspirations of present minority employees in the foreign service establishment.

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APPENDIX A

"Ten Years After Kerner: An Economic Profile"

Prepared By: National Urban League, Inc.  
Research Department

APPENDIX B

Social Welfare

Prepared By: Dr. James R. Dumpson

APPENDIX A - TABLE I

Official Unemployment Trends Among Black and White Workers, 1966 - 1977

(Numbers in Thousands)

|                    | <u>Blacks</u> |                          | <u>Whites</u> |                          |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Totals</u>      | <u>1967</u>   | <u>1977<sup>1/</sup></u> | <u>1967</u>   | <u>1977<sup>1/</sup></u> |
| Unemployed (No.)   | 638           | 1,492                    | 2,338         | 5,452                    |
| Rate               | 7.4           | 13.2                     | 3.4           | 6.3                      |
| <u>Adult Men</u>   |               |                          |               |                          |
| Unemployed         | 193           | 556                      | 866           | 2,200                    |
| Rate               | 4.3           | 10.1                     | 2.1           | 4.7                      |
| <u>Adult Women</u> |               |                          |               |                          |
| Unemployed         | 241           | 567                      | 837           | 1,948                    |
| Rate               | 7.1           | 11.8                     | 3.8           | 6.3                      |
| <u>Teenagers</u>   |               |                          |               |                          |
| Unemployed         | 204           | 369                      | 635           | 1,304                    |
| Rate               | 26.5          | 38.6                     | 11.0          | 15.7                     |

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<sup>1/</sup> Unemployment figures for 1977 are based on an 11-month average, while the figures for 1967 are 12-month averages.

Source: Prepared by the National Urban League Research Department from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics unemployment data.

APPENDIX A - TABLE II

A. Number and Percent of Poor Families by Race, 1966 - 1976

| <u>Families</u> | <u>Number Poor (In Millions)</u> |             |                   | <u>Percent Poor</u> |             |                   |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|
|                 | <u>1966</u>                      | <u>1976</u> | <u>Difference</u> | <u>1966</u>         | <u>1976</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
| Black           | 1.6                              | 1.6         | 0                 | 36%                 | 28%         | -8%               |
| White           | 4.1                              | 3.4         | -0.7              | 9%                  | 7%          | -2%               |

B. Black and White Median Family Income in Current and Constant Dollars

| <u>Families</u> | <u>1966</u> | <u>1976</u> | <u>Percent Change</u> | <u>1966</u> | <u>1976</u> | <u>Percent Change</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|                 |             |             |                       |             |             |                       |
| Black           | \$ 4,507    | \$ 9,242    | +105%                 | \$ 7,905    | \$ 9,242    | +17%                  |
| White           | \$ 7,825    | \$15,537    | + 99%                 | \$13,726    | \$15,537    | +13%                  |
| Ratio           | 58%         | 59%         |                       | 58%         | 59%         |                       |
| Difference      | \$ 3,318    | \$ 6,295    | + 90%                 | \$ 5,821    | \$ 6,295    | + 8%                  |

C. Proportion of Families with Incomes of \$15,000 or More by Race

| <u>Families</u> | <u>In Current Dollars</u> |             | <u>In Constant (1976) Dollars</u> |             | <u>Percent Change</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|                 | <u>1966</u>               | <u>1976</u> | <u>1966</u>                       | <u>1976</u> |                       |
| Nonwhite        | 2%                        | 30%         | 19%                               | 30%         | +58%                  |
| White           | 10%                       | 53%         | 41%                               | 53%         | +29%                  |

D. Proportion of Families with Incomes of \$25,000 or More By Race

| <u>Families</u> | <u>In Current Dollars</u> |             | <u>In Constant (1976) Dollars</u> |             | <u>Percent Change</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|                 | <u>1966</u>               | <u>1976</u> | <u>1966</u>                       | <u>1976</u> |                       |
| Nonwhite        | 0.2%                      | 8.3%        | 3%                                | 8%          | +166%                 |
| White           | 2.0%                      | 19.1%       | 12%                               | 19%         | + 58%                 |

Source: Prepared by the National Urban League Research Department from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey Data



APPENDIX A - TABLE III

White Perceptions of Racial Discrimination

1970 - 1977<sup>2/</sup>

| <u>Push For Racial Equality</u>                        |             |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                                        | <u>1970</u> | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>                                           | 100         | 100         |
| Too Fast                                               | 49          | 55          |
| Too Slow                                               | 14          | 5           |
| About Right                                            | 28          | 27          |
| Not Sure                                               | 10          | 12          |
| <br><u>Assuming Full Equality</u>                      |             |             |
|                                                        | <u>1970</u> | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>                                           | 100         | 100         |
| Discriminated Against                                  | 76          | 33          |
| Not Discriminated Against                              | 14          | 59          |
| Not Sure                                               | 4           | 8           |
| <br><u>Getting Quality Education in Public Schools</u> |             |             |
|                                                        | <u>1970</u> | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>                                           | 100         | 100         |
| Discriminated Against                                  | 60          | 19          |
| Not Discriminated Against                              | 36          | 76          |
| Not Sure                                               | 4           | 5           |

2/ In the 1970 survey, respondents were asked to indicate the degree of existing racial discrimination in terms of "A great deal," "Somewhat", "Only a little" or "Not at all." However, in the 1977 survey, respondents were given only two options—whether blacks are "discriminated against or not." In order to make the results from the 1970 survey comparable, the categories of "a great deal", "somewhat" and "only a little" were combined into "discriminated against."

APPENDIX A - TABLE IV

White Perception of Racial Discrimination

1970 - 1977

|                           | <u>Getting Decent Housing</u>            |             |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------|
|                           | <u>1970</u>                              | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>              | 100                                      | 100         |
| Discriminated Against     | 76                                       | 34          |
| Not Discriminated Against | 20                                       | 61          |
| Not Sure                  | 4                                        | 6           |
|                           | <u>Treatment By Police</u>               |             |
|                           | <u>1970</u>                              | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>              | 100                                      | 100         |
| Discriminated Against     | 47                                       | 28          |
| Not Discriminated Against | 42                                       | 60          |
| Not Sure                  | 11                                       | 11          |
|                           | <u>Treatment By Courts</u> <sup>3/</sup> |             |
|                           | <u>1970</u>                              | <u>1977</u> |
| <u>Total</u>              | 100                                      | 100         |
| Discriminated Against     | 36                                       | 33          |
| Not Discriminated Against | 50                                       | 57          |
| Not Sure                  | 15                                       | 11          |

<sup>3/</sup> In the 1970 survey, the question asked about treatment by the local courts. In the 1977 survey, it referred to the treatment of those arrested for crimes. White is actually total for 1977.

APPENDIX A - TABLE V

White Perception of Racial Discrimination

1970 - 1977

|                           | 1970                | <u>Achieving Job Equality<sup>4/</sup></u> |                    |                          |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|                           |                     | 1977                                       |                    |                          |                           |
|                           | <u>Job Equality</u> | <u>Wages</u>                               | <u>Manual Jobs</u> | <u>White Collar Jobs</u> | <u>Skilled Labor Jobs</u> |
| <u>Total</u>              | 100                 | 100                                        | 100                | 100                      | 100                       |
| Discriminated Against     | 62                  | 21                                         | 10                 | 34                       | 26                        |
| Not Discriminated Against | 34                  | 72                                         | 86                 | 59                       | 68                        |
| Not Sure                  | 4                   | 7                                          | 4                  | 7                        | 6                         |

<sup>4/</sup> In the 1970 survey, one question was asked on jobs — "getting jobs equal to their training and ability."

Source: Prepared by NUL Research Department from Harris Polls.

APPENDIX B

SOCIAL WELFARE

How poor people feel about work is an issue surrounded by much opinion, emotion, and prejudice, but until recently very little research.

The following are the results of some of the research that has been done:

A. Participant Observation Study -- St. Louis (1965)

The researchers lived in a housing project for low income blacks. They discovered that job searching was not approached eagerly and that the people attached little self-importance to work except as a means of making money. Yet the majority, over two-thirds, thought that the reason for unemployment was not that they did not want to work.

B. Participant Observation Study -- District of Columbia (1967)

In this study it was found that people attributed little self-importance to work but that this was the result of having continuously failed in the world of work. Most could only qualify for unskilled, menial jobs that would not pay enough to support a family. They valued work but were fearful of more failure. The inference derived was that the poor do identify work with self-respect but environmental circumstances stand in the way of obtaining decent jobs so they withdraw.

C. Survey Studies -- 1969

Results of surveys in California and New Orleans showed that the preference for work among black welfare recipients was approximately the same as that of the more affluent black and white men.

D. New York City Study -- 1968

AFDC mothers were asked "Would you prefer to work for pay or stay at home?" Seventy percent of the women said they would prefer to work. The same question was asked in a nation-wide study of AFDC recipients and potential recipients. Over 80 percent replied that they would work if they could find a steady job.

E. Study of Slum Youths -- 1967-68

In a survey of a Puerto Rican area in New York City questions about work were answered by both adolescents and adults in each household. Both agreed that hard work and ability were necessary for success. A survey connected with the Neighborhood Youth Corporation was conducted in poor and in affluent districts of New York City. The following question was asked: "Supposing that somebody just gave you money you needed each week, would you like this better than working?" More than 72 percent of all groups said they would rather be working. Hence, even slum youths expressed an interest in working that went beyond money as such. It indicates that the poor have a positive view of work.

F. The New Jersey Experiment

In this study conducted by OEO, cash benefits were made available to groups of low income two-parent families without a work requirement, in an effort to determine whether or not the availability of such aid would have an effect on their work effort. The evidence indicates that with reasonable generous levels of benefits and benefit reduction rates of no higher than 70 percent, there is no significant change in the work pattern among family heads.



G. The Brookings Study

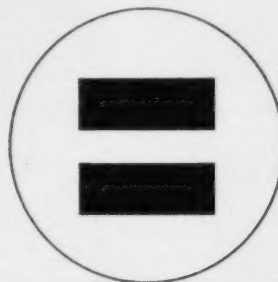
This study was done to determine the differences and fundamental similarities in the work orientations of the poor and the more affluent groups in society. It has been one of the more detailed and scientific studies ever done. It concludes that poor people -- males, females, blacks, whites, youth -- identify their self-esteem with work as strongly as do the non-poor. It revealed no difference between the poor and the non-poor when it comes to life goals and wanting to work.

SUMMARY: All studies indicate that the poor believe in work and want to work. Differences between work orientations of the poor and the non-poor seem explainable by different environmental experiences -- their past failure in the work place and their fear of failing again.

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